

COUNTRY LIFE

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KETURAH-COLLINGS.

LADY KATHLEEN SMITH.

73, Park Street, W.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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THE ECONOMICS OF ... FRUIT GROWING.

WE are now approaching closely to the time when the anxieties of the fruit-grower are at their highest. In a week or two the fruit trees in the orchards will be ready to bloom, and the perils of frost will have to be faced. It is a truism to say that uncertainty is the great drawback to the calling of the fruit-grower in a climate such as ours, and the great object of scientific teaching in our time is to reduce that uncertainty to its lowest limit. In order to achieve that end we must realise exactly how the uncertainty arises. Very largely we are afraid it is due to neglect. Except in a very small number of districts the planting of orchards was not very carefully done by the last and previous generations. It is only in recent times that the owners in choosing varieties that they tried to grow have taken their soil into careful consideration. Of recent years, however, increasing attention has been directed to the point. The agricultural statistics, year by year as they are issued, show that an increasing number of men are devoting themselves to the growing of apples, pears and plums as a means of livelihood. And the newcomers are not like the old. We may assume that in the majority of cases they have taken pains to ascertain the conditions under which they may reasonably hope for success. Thanks to the work done by Mr. Spencer Pickering and other experimentalists they are in a position to know how fruit can be most economically produced, and they take real pains to select the sorts suitable to the place in which they are located. Any one who contrasts the businesslike appearance of a modern orchard with the narrow, mossy, picturesque, unfruitful trees in

an old one will be in a position to ascertain the extent to which progress has been made.

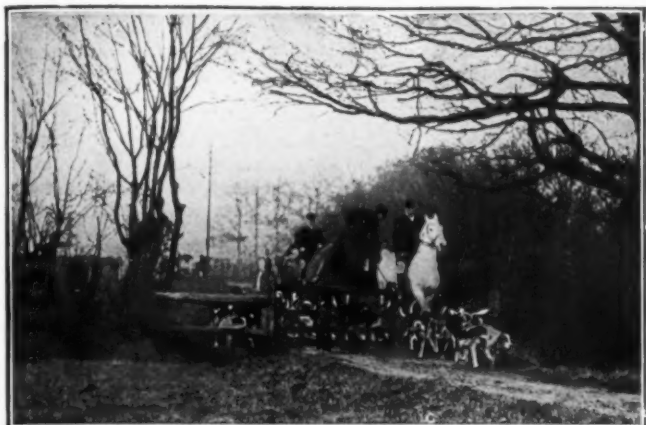
But when the trees are planted the uncertainty has not by any means been eliminated. Our climate is one that, to say the least of it, is not antagonistic to the breeding and multiplication of insect pests. Old orchardists knew this very well, but their devices for coping with the evil were primitive and ineffective. Some, indeed, were merely superstitious. Others were on lines which have been developed in our time. Thus it was not at all a bad custom to collect chaff and burn heaps of it in the orchard during the early spring months. In these days of luxury there are probably not many people who remember the time when the pillow-cases and mattresses of the poor were almost invariably filled with chaff. Once a year this was changed and the old chaff taken out and burnt. It made a fire that lasted a long time and produced much smoke. The object of placing it near the fruit trees was to destroy the insects, but it probably helped the crop in a very different way, of which we shall have something to say anon. Various plans of whitewashing the stems of trees were also tried, and indeed enjoy some measure of favour to this day. The most skilful orchardists, however, are now agreed that the weapon with which to fight insects is the spraying-machine. Its use must not be confined to one period of the year, because there are many different pests with different habits and different breeding seasons to be attacked. Mr. Spencer Pickering has done no more useful work than that which demonstrates the good effects produced by intelligent spraying.

There is a third and a still more formidable enemy to be encountered. This is frost. Let the trees be chosen ever so well, let them be absolutely suited to the ground, and arranged according to the most scientific principles; still if no precautions are taken a killing frost may render the labour of the worker in vain. For long it was supposed that the frost was what the railway companies call an act of God against which it was impossible to take any efficient measures of precaution. But of recent years there has been a tendency to rebel against this submission. About a year ago the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries issued a leaflet in which they directed the attention of fruit-growers to various methods by means of which the evil effects of frost could either be reduced to a minimum or evaded altogether. The chief agency employed was fire. In some districts it is usual to make what is called a "smother fire." That is to say, a body of fire is made and when the heat is glowing rubbish is heaped on of a kind that is slow of combustion, and produces the maximum quantity of smoke. This smoke hanging about the orchard acts in two different ways, or, rather, is supposed to act. We can scarcely believe, for our part, that any number of fires is going to raise the temperature of the orchard at the height of the trees. But the smoke undoubtedly acts as a shield to the fruit buds when the sun comes out. The damage done by the sun is almost invariably due to the sudden thawing of the frozen bud. The existence of the smoke renders that thawing more gradual, and this probably accounts for the very excellent results that have been gained from fire both in this country and in the United States of America. The plans adopted in the latter country have been carefully described in a pamphlet by Mr. E. H. Grubb. He tells us that about seven per cent. of the orchards in the Grand Valley were heated during the danger period of 1909. The orchards thus treated produced crops, while those in the danger zone lost theirs. He considers that the results "justify the assertion that it is possible to protect the fruit crops from the early and late frosts by applying artificial heat." In America various pots are used for the consumption of oil, which is considered the most suitable fuel. Those heaters are placed in the orchards in spring when the buds begin to swell and are ready for ignition as soon as the weather forecast points to a frost. The difficulty we foresee in this country is that the most devastating frosts here are those which are accompanied by wind. We have seen the whole produce of a fine orchard that had been planted and tended with the utmost skill and care lost through the persistent blowing of a damp nor-easter whose mists were frozen on to the fruit crops. This occurred two years ago during the historic snowstorm at Easter.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Kathleen Smith, daughter of the Dowager-Lady Leitrim. Her marriage to Mr. Granville Smith of the Coldstream Guards took place on the 2nd inst.

*. It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens, or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



COUNTRY NOTES

WE have pleasure in directing attention to the first of an important and most interesting series of articles on the exploration of New Guinea. In the opening essay Mr. Ogilvie-Grant, to whom credit is due for the energy and enterprise with which he organised the expedition, tells us something of New Guinea and the field which it represents to the student of natural phenomena. It is one of the most wonderful lands in the world and possesses a flora and fauna of unique character and unsurpassed importance. Mr. Ogilvie-Grant's account will be followed in due time by those of the various members of the expedition. It has been arranged that the photographs and articles they send home shall appear in our pages as they arrive; so that from time to time it will be our business and our great pleasure to show what has been done in the way of opening up that extraordinary tract of mountainous land known as the Snow Mountains of Central Dutch New Guinea. Already we know it to be a strange and romantic land. Traces have been found of an animal strange as the "questyng beste" of Mallory's woodland. Only glimpses of it have been caught, but some of the adventurers hope to obtain first-hand knowledge of its size and appearance.

Our readers are probably aware that this is one of many expeditions that have been organised by the authorities of N.H.M. of recent years for the purpose of exploring unknown countries. They have already added a vast number of new and remarkable specimens of flora and fauna to the national collections. It is expected that all previous acquisitions of the kind will be surpassed by the productions of the Snow Mountains of Dutch New Guinea. It has to be noted, however, that the funds for carrying out these expeditions have always been raised by private subscription, and in the present instance the sum of four thousand five hundred pounds has been collected, in large part from the members of the British Ornithologists' Union. This amount is not sufficient to carry out the work as satisfactorily as could be wished. The difficulty of transport in an extremely steep and heavily wooded country, totally devoid of trodden paths, greatly increases the expense. If the expedition is to be kept in the field for a year—and this certainly is not a great length of time to allow—at least another thousand pounds will be required. We cannot help thinking that some of our readers who are deeply interested in zoological questions will be glad to volunteer assistance. In the end the nation will reap the reward, so that to support the expedition is in itself an act of patriotism.

Whatever be his complexion the plain citizen will learn with dismay that there is a prospect of another General Election taking place in April or May. Business men especially are disgusted at the intelligence. These two months are almost the busiest of the year, and it happens that this year trade is reviving in nearly every direction! It would be greatly to be deplored, therefore, that political exigencies should demand that an election, which always paralyses commerce, should be held just now. It would, so to speak, rob the country of a harvest that has been long awaited and richly earned in previous years of dulness. The affairs of the State are chaotic. Practical men have forgotten the principle laid down by the Duke of Wellington under circumstances not altogether dissimilar. The Duke's historic remark that the King's Government must be carried on is a maxim that all statesmen should act upon. Since the last General Election no great issue has been raised to change the minds of the electors,

and although it is extremely probable that one party or the other would get back stronger than it was before, this would be due to the hazard of the fray more than to anything else.

The resignation by Mr. W. H. St. John Hope, M.A., of his post as assistant-secretary of the Society of Antiquaries will be regretted by more than the Council and Fellows of "the Old Lady of Burlington House." Mr. Hope has, for the twenty-five years that he has served the society, been a prominent figure in archaeological circles, and has contributed to the stock of knowledge a vast amount of patient research, which can be found in countless "Proceedings." He has been, however, far more than a mere writer. It will be remembered always to his honour that the excavations at Silchester are chiefly due to two men—the late Mr. Fox and Mr. Hope. It was no small enterprise, the careful digging of one hundred acres, and it has taken twenty years. It is not too much to say that it is the greatest English monument to the archaeology of the spade, and does not a little to deliver this country from the reproach that persistent research of the kind is more often undertaken abroad than in England.

Now that Silchester has been finished, a like exploration of Old Sarum has begun, and a start will soon be made with Verulamium. Mr. Hope's resignation of his official post happily does not mean that his unique experience in such enterprises will be lost to British archaeology. Rather we trust that his retirement is to be regarded in the light of *reculer pour mieux sauter*, and that a larger leisure will result in many years of work in the field which has already yielded him so large a reputation. The ready help he accorded to all students who sought him will be greatly missed by antiquaries both within and without the society, and it will be difficult to secure a successor equipped both with so great a store of knowledge and so helpful and kindly a way of imparting it.

LUGGAGE IN ADVANCE.

"The Fairies must have come," I said,
"For through the moist leaves, brown and dead,
The Primroses are pushing up,
And here's a scarlet Fairy-cup.
They must have come, because I see
A single Wood-Anemone,
The flower that everybody knows
The Fairies use to scent their clothes.
And hark! the South Wind blowing, fills
The trumpets of the Daffodils.
They MUST have come!"

Then loud to me

Sang from a budding cherry tree,
A cheerful Thrush . . . "I say! I say!
The Fairy Folk are on their way.
Look out! Look out! beneath your feet,
Are all their treasures, Sweet! Sweet! Sweet!
They could not carry them, you see,
Those caskets crammed with witchery,
So ready for the first Spring dance,
They sent their Luggage in Advance!"

FAY INCHFAWN.

We have received from the office of the Agent-General for Tasmania a very interesting correction. In our issue of the 12th inst., following the newspaper report of Dr. McCall's lecture to the Royal Society, we said that in Tasmania official reports show a profit of twenty-five pounds per acre for apple-growing. It appears that what Dr. McCall said was that "after paying expenses a minimum profit of forty pounds could be expected." We are glad to receive information of this kind on such great authority. The use of the word "minimum" must be singularly comforting to those who think of embarking on fruit-growing in Tasmania. It points to a condition of which we can form no idea in this country, where the grower of apples has to contend with frosts that will reduce his minimum to nothing, with winds that may scatter his apples to the ground before they have become of the slightest value, and pests that ravage the orchards in spite of all the scientific weapons that can be brought to bear on them. But Tasmania, as far as the apple-grower is concerned, appears to resemble the Happy Valley pictured by Tennyson, "where falls not hail, nor rain, nor any snow." It is a splendid assurance, that of securing a minimum profit of forty pounds per acre, since six hundred acres would yield the respectable minimum income of two thousand four hundred pounds per annum.

At this season of the year, when the shop windows are crowded with eggs, real and imitation, it would be interesting to find out how far the diet proper to Lent still is eaten. We do not mean by the strictly religious people, but by the community at large. In country places there is probably more attention

paid to it than in the towns. Children may still be heard repeating the old rhyme:

Tid Mid Misera, Carlin, Palm, and Pace-egg Day.

On Shrove Tuesday pancakes are very generally consumed. On Palm Sunday, which is called Fig Sunday in Buckinghamshire and some other parts of the country, there is a fig fair, at which figs are the chief article of diet, in commemoration, it is said, of the miracle of the fig tree. Simnel cakes are to be found in many confectioners' shops, though they are probably very different from those that were concocted when Herrick wrote his famous lines, "I will thee a simnel bring, when thou go'st a mothering." At many houses it is still thought incumbent to offer the guest salt cod and buttered parsnips on Good Friday, a truly Lenten dish; and Easter, of course, has its eggs, called in the North pasc or pascal eggs, in obvious reference to the Passover. These are gathered by the children at farmhouses and dyed with gorse flowers, coffee grounds, onion peelings and other substances.

In monasteries there must have been much scientific study and research, as in agriculture, horticulture and various sciences much is owed to the studious monks. It is, however, a curious paradox that at the present moment two holy Orders should be celebrated chiefly by the excellent liqueurs they produce, Benedictine and Chartreuse. As Sir Thomas Browne might have said, It were a curious speculation as to what set the first monk concocting a beverage like Chartreuse. It must surely have been a rebellion from the orderly regimen of the monastery. The monkish inventor must have considered that unless he could make a drink potent in small quantities it would be of little use to him. Chartreuse has been in great danger of passing out of the hands of the monks altogether; but we are glad to learn that in the recent decision of the Court of Appeal the previous judgments are reversed, and that Lord Shaw and his colleagues hold that as goodwill, trade-mark and business go together, the monks are entitled to retain their monopoly.

At the Royal Botanic Gardens preparations have been made for exhibiting and demonstrating every aspect of intensive culture. About half an acre of ground has been set apart in which has been laid out a model French garden, and the various vegetables suitable to the system will be grown there. This should confer a boon indeed upon the small holders of Great Britain. We assume that at the demonstration plot very careful accounts will be kept in order to show whether French gardening is a profitable form of agriculture in this country or not. So far those who have taken it up privately have not been able to set forth accounts of a satisfactory nature. This may be partly due to the fact that they have not been long enough in existence, and consequently have to estimate where we would look for exact figures. On the other hand, the opponents of French gardening say, with a considerable amount of common-sense, that whatever has been achieved by the heat in manure can be done better in a house where the temperature is under more thorough control. The experiment at the Royal Botanic Gardens should dispose of this controversy once and for all.

We heartily welcome the opening of a boys' club in connection with the Navy League, as its object is one which ought to meet with general sympathy. It is to enable boys of the poorest class between the ages of ten and seventeen to be formed into a brigade, and to be placed under the charge of naval instructors, to have naval drill, and generally to be fitted for the work of a man-of-war. Two purposes ought to be achieved in this way—the boys would be kept from the streets, where they are an annoyance to other people and acquire mischievous habits for themselves, and they would learn something of the Navy and acquire the spirit of patriotism. In a word, the promoters hope to establish a movement in connection with the Navy not unlike the organisation of Scouts which were formed under General Sir R. S. S. Baden-Powell. There are many reasons for auguring success for the undertaking. English boys are naturally interested in the sea, and ought to require little stimulating to take up the movement enthusiastically. Then out of the juvenile population which is drifting about without anchor there would be formed good material for eventually manning our ships, a most desirable and, indeed, necessary end.

Mr. Beecham's season of grand opera came to an end on Saturday last with the ninth performance of "Elektra." That this work should have been given so many times is in itself a great achievement. A few months ago no one would have thought it possible that a music-drama of Strauss' could have been played to nine full houses. Yet Mr. Beecham's enterprise seems to have met with the success it deserved, and he now proposes to give a season of light opera at His Majesty's beginning on May 6th with Offenbach's "Contes d'Hoffmann." It really looks, too, as if those who can appreciate something more than a mere E in alt will to a certain extent have their desires gratified, for, in addition to the works

of Strauss and Debussy in his last season, Mr. Beecham announces a week of Mozart. This news seems almost too good to be true after the monstrous neglect of Mozart in recent years. We prophesy that Mr. Beecham will be as successful at His Majesty's as he has been at Covent Garden.

A singular little crisis has arisen in a village within thirty miles of London. The medical examiner of the village school reported on a number of children that their heads were unclean, and the schoolmaster told them to stay away till this state of things was remedied. Now it is the turn of the attendance officer, who insists that the children should go to school; and certainly they are doing no good roaming the fields in search of mischief. The parents at first refused to take the necessary steps, but enlightened opinion is gradually coming round to the side of the doctor, and in a very large sense the incident has assisted in village education. It has brought home to the inhabitants the fact that cleanliness is a duty to others.

THE SOLDIER.

The large report of fame I lack,
And shining clasps and crimson scars
For I have held my bivouac
Alone amid the untroubled stars.

My battlefield has known no dawn
Beclouded by a thousand spears;
I've been no mounting tyrant's pawn
To buy his glory with my tears.

It never seemed a noble thing
Some little leagues of land to gain
From broken men, nor yet to fling
Abroad the thunderbolts of pain.

Yet I have felt the quickening breath
As peril heavy peril kissed—
My weapon was a little faith,
And fear was my antagonist.

Not a brief hour of cannonade,
But many days of bitter strife,
Till God of His great pity laid
Across my brow the leaves of life.

JOHN DRINKWATER.

It is possible that the extreme gravity of the situation caused by the recent floods in Paris has made us a little oblivious of the minor, but yet very considerable, troubles which parts of England have suffered from a similar cause. The seriousness of the position created by the frequent flooding of the Medway has lately been occupying the attention of the inhabitants of Tonbridge and the surrounding districts, where much loss has been occasioned both to the farming interests and also to the navigation of the river. A meeting has recently been held in the town, which was attended by Captain Spender Clay, the Parliamentary representative, who expressed his willingness to promote a Bill in Parliament for dealing with the situation if it should seem advisable to do so. The Lighterage Company, which has been endeavouring to carry on navigation in spite of the floods, appears to be likely to give up all efforts in that direction. The freightage has decreased by nearly one-half within the last five years. The outcome of the discussion was the passing of a resolution, moved by Mr. Lowry, head-master of Tonbridge School, that a committee be formed to meet the directors of the Medway Navigation and Lighterage Companies to consider the matter and issue a report.

From reports which come in from different parts of England, especially in the South, it is evident that there have been a very unusual number of Camberwell Beauties successfully hibernating and showing themselves on warm days of early spring. It may even be said that it is very unusual for even a single specimen of this beautiful butterfly to be noticed in this country. It is, however, very variable in its appearance. What is, perhaps, singular is that these hibernating specimens have been more remarked than those which presumably must have been about in the autumn, though no doubt it is in the late winter and early spring months, when there are so few butterflies, that the hibernating ones are conspicuous when they come forth from their hiding-places. The special interest of the appearance of these Camberwell Beauties lies in the fact that the eggs of the future brood are laid by the females which thus survive the winter. The larvæ feed mainly on the white willow, but also on the nettle and the birch. They are hairy, black, and with dull red spots.

Passing through that county which has been called "The Garden of England," but might, perhaps, with more propriety be called its orchard—all that land of the fruit-farmer in the lower levels of Kent—the precautions which the fruit-grower has to take against the attacks of the winter moth and other noxious insects are very much in evidence. There are few orchards in which the trees are not either whitewashed against the vermin,

so that they give, from a distance, the illusion that they are already, in the month of March, white with bloom, or else have the grease-band tied about their stems in order that the wingless female of the winter moth may be caught in it as she crawls up the stem after developing, in the ground, from the pupal state. There has been some discussion as to the relative merits of grease-band and whitewashing or spraying; but the evidence of the great majority of Kentish orchards goes to show that the farmers of that county have a practical faith in the grease-band, which requires less time and labour, whatever their theoretical convictions may be.

Although the feasts and seasons of the Church are falling so early this year, there is every prospect that the so-called palm will be well out in most districts by its statutory, though variable,

date of Palm Sunday. The middle of March, in the absence of the usual cold winds which commonly retard growth in that trying month, found most of the wild things in advance of their normal time. The daffodils were out in many a county and primroses were abundant. A curious feature of the year was the appearance, together with these and other signs of the spring, of the holly trees still laden with red berries. They remain so even now. But this is not due so directly to the weather conditions, although no doubt the conditions must have been in favour of a very rich growth of the berries. The weather indirectly has contributed to the permanence of berries by giving the birds, in all the soft and wet months of the winter, plentiful insect and other succulent food. They have not, therefore, been driven to attack the berries nearly as much as in a more normal season, when juicy meals are difficult to find.

THE EXPEDITION OF THE BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION TO THE SNOW MOUNTAINS OF NEW GUINEA.

I.—A SKETCH OF NEW GUINEA AND OF THE HISTORY OF THE EXPEDITION.

OF late years an ever-increasing number of scientific expeditions have been despatched from Great Britain and other countries to investigate the fauna and flora, as well as the geographical features, of unexplored regions of the globe. They have added vastly to our knowledge. Many extraordinary and hitherto unknown forms of animal and vegetable life have been discovered, thanks to the splendid work which has been achieved by enthusiastic travellers and naturalists in all parts of the world. Much, however, still remains to be done, and, outside the Polar circles, few parts are still so little known as the interior of New Guinea or Papua.

This vast island, the largest in the world, lies immediately to the north of Australia, from which it is separated by the shallow waters of Torres Strait, about eighty geographical miles in width. New Guinea is 1,490 miles long, with a maximum breadth of about 410 miles, and lies between 0deg. 25min. and 10deg. 40min. S. lat. and between 130deg. 50min. and 150deg. 35min. E. long. A great central system stretches like a backbone, roughly speaking, throughout the length of the island, culminating in the Snow Mountains in Central Dutch New Guinea. This immense snow-capped range, the highest peaks of which are believed to attain an altitude of

from 16,500ft. to 17,500ft., probably exceed the Owen Stanley Mountains in British New Guinea by about 5,000ft., and are thus the loftiest mountains in the whole Archipelago and in the whole area between the Himalaya and the Andes. Until recently these great mountains have been regarded as forming part of the Charles Louis Mountains, but this mistake has been corrected in the latest Dutch maps of New Guinea, the latter being a distinct and much less elevated range lying to the west. By far the larger portion of the island, including the western half from about 141deg. E. long., belongs to the Dutch, having been brought under the direct control of Holland in 1899. The eastern half of the island, from the 141st parallel eastward, is about equally divided between Great Britain and Germany; the southern part and south-eastern extremity, forming British New Guinea, was placed under the administration of the Government of Queensland in 1888, while the remaining portion, lying to the north and known as Kaiser Wilhelm Land, has been under the administration of the Imperial Government since 1899.

The wonderful fauna of New Guinea, especially the marvellous forms of bird and insect life to be found there, have long attracted the attention of naturalists in all parts of the world. The



GREAT SICKLE-BILLED BIRD OF PARADISE (*Epimachus speciosus*).

Vividly black; head and back green, with plumes tipped with purple and bronze green, tail purplish blue.

exploration during recent years of certain portions of the Dutch territory at the north-west end of the island, and of the British and German possessions at the eastern extremity, has brought to light many wonderful new species, more particularly new birds of Paradise and Gardener-Bower-birds; but practically the whole of the interior of this vast island remains untouched, though there is no part of the globe that promises to

yield such an abundance of zoological treasures to those who are prepared to face the difficulties of penetrating to the mountains. Until quite recently the hostility of the natives in the southern part of Dutch New Guinea and the risks attending such an attempt rendered the chances of success too small to justify the experiment, and the Snow Mountains thus remained an unexplored and greatly desired goal for the traveller. The only serious attempts to get there have been made by Dutch expeditions under the leadership of Dr. Lorentz, who has twice tried, but without success, to reach the snows of Wilhelmina Peak, at the east end of the range, by way of the North River. He is at present engaged in making a third attempt, following the same route as on the previous occasions: and a telegram recently received announces the fact that he has reached the Snow Mountains and has climbed to the foot of a great glacier, at an elevation of about 15,000ft. During the last few years Mr. Walter Goodfellow, a well-known traveller and accomplished

attention. It was at first his intention to send out a small zoological expedition, with Mr. Goodfellow as leader, and funds were raised for that purpose, and arrangements made accordingly. It so happened, however, that just

naturalist, has made several expeditions to New Guinea and, as the result of careful enquiries, has satisfied himself that it is now possible for a properly equipped expedition to explore the range with a reasonable prospect of success. On learning this, the writer promptly set to work to organise an expedition to this land, offering such unlimited possibilities, which had for long engaged his special



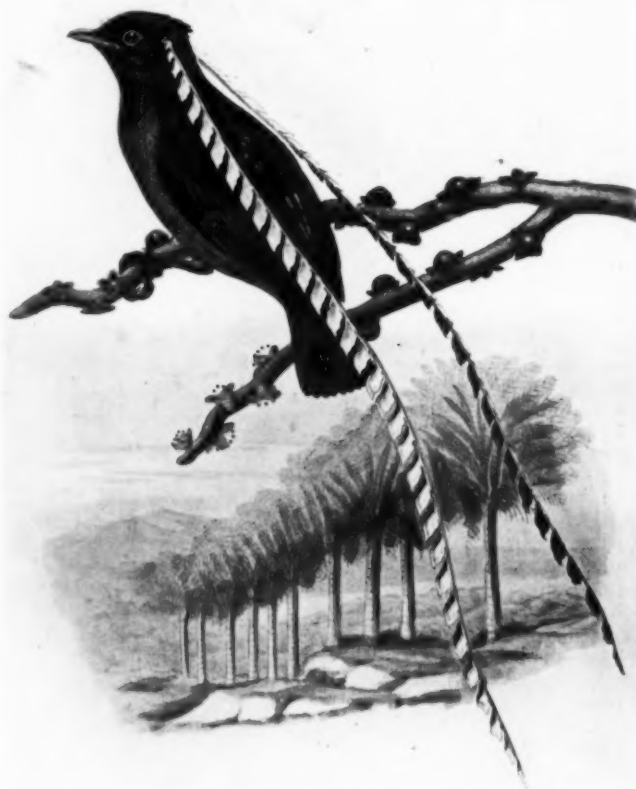
THREE-TOED ECHIDNA (*Zaglossus bruijnii*).

One of the extraordinary animals which lays two eggs, hatches them in its abdominal pouch and suckles its young.



TREE-KANGAROO (*Dendrolagus*).

One of the remarkable forms which are characteristic of New Guinea.



KING OF SAXONY'S BIRD OF PARADISE (*Pteridophora Alberti*).

Velvet black with yellow breast: long ear-plumes ornamented with extraordinary enamel-like blue plates.

at that time (December, 1908) the members of the British Ornithologists' Union, which was founded in 1858, were celebrating their jubilee, and it seemed fitting that they should mark so memorable an occasion by undertaking some great zoological exploration. The writer therefore laid his scheme before the meeting on December 9th, and his proposal was received with great enthusiasm. A committee was formed, consisting of Mr. F. Du Cane Godman, F.R.S. (president of the B.O.U.), Dr. P. L. Sclater, F.R.S. (editor of the *Ibis*), Mr. E. G. B. Meade-Waldo, Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant (secretary) and Mr. C. E. Fagan (treasurer). At the request of the Royal Geographical Society it was decided that their interests should also be represented and that a surveyor and assistant-surveyor, to be selected by the Committee, should be added, the society

undertaking to contribute funds for that purpose. The necessary steps were then taken to obtain the consent of the Netherlands Government to allow the proposed expedition to travel in Dutch New Guinea and to carry out the scheme of exploration. The negotiations of our Foreign Office were successful in obtaining through the Dutch Minister for the Colonies the necessary permit, and it was arranged that the



FEATHER-TAILED PHALANGER (*Distachurus pennatus*).
A dormouse-like animal: one of the rarest species found in New Guinea.

British Expedition should be allowed to land on the South Coast on January 1st, 1910. Not only was this permission granted, thanks to the kindly help of Sir Edward Grey and the British Minister at The Hague, but the Government of Holland showed itself animated with such readiness to assist the expedition that it supplied not only an armed guard at its own expense, but placed a gunboat at the disposal of the Committee to convey the party from Batavia to New Guinea.

The Committee wish to take this opportunity of publicly expressing their most grateful thanks to the Netherlands Government for these and many other substantial acts of kindness, which have been shown to the members of their expedition.

The above is a brief sketch of the history of this great undertaking which landed at the mouth of the Mimika River, on the South Coast of Dutch New Guinea, on January 5th, 1910. The members selected to serve on the expedition are the following:

(1) **MR. WALTER GOODFELLOW** (Leader).

Mr. Goodfellow travelled first in South America, where he spent about two years in collecting birds in the Andes of Colombia and Ecuador. Thence he descended the Rio Napo and Amazon to Para. Subsequently he turned his attention to the East, and visited various parts of New Guinea and the neighbouring islands; Formosa (where he ascended Mount Morrison,



STRIPED PHALANGER (*Dactylopsila trivirgata*).
Another typical form widely distributed in New Guinea.

13,880ft.); the Philippine Islands, etc. He is an excellent naturalist and has brought home from time to time splendid collections of skins and large numbers of living birds of Paradise, as well as other rare species.

(2) **MR. WILFRED STALKER** (Collector of Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, etc.).

Mr. Stalker is an admirable taxidermist and skilful trapper of mammals and has already spent four years in New Guinea. He has also travelled in Central Australia, where he has done excellent zoological work. He has brought back a large number of living birds of Paradise, etc., from British New Guinea and the Aru Islands, including the first living example of the beautiful blue bird of Paradise (*Paradisornis rudolphi*).

[The melancholy news has just reached us that Mr. Stalker was drowned on January 9th in the Mimika River. His loss is a great misfortune and his valuable services will be difficult to replace.]

(3) **MR. GUY C. SHORTRIDGE** (Collector of Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, etc.).

Mr. Shortridge is an excellent taxidermist and an enthusiastic collector of mammals and birds. He has already done good work in Western Australia, Java and Borneo.

(4) **MR. A. F. R. WOLLASTON** (Medical Officer to the Expedition, Entomologist and Botanist).

Mr. Wollaston was Medical Officer, Entomologist and Botanist to the Ruwenzori Expedition. He has travelled in New Guinea, Africa and many other parts of the world. He is a member of the Alpine Club and a talented writer.

(5) **Captain C. G. RAWLING** (Surveyor).

Captain Rawling has already done valuable survey work in Tibet, which is described in his book, "The Great Plateau." He was the recipient of the Murchison award of the Royal Geographical Society.



PARADISE BUTTERFLY OF NEW GUINEA.
(*Ornithoptera paradisea*). Half natural size.
1. Male—black and brilliant golden green. 2. Female—black with brownish white markings.

(6) Dr. ERIC MARSHALL (Assistant-Surveyor and Surgeon).

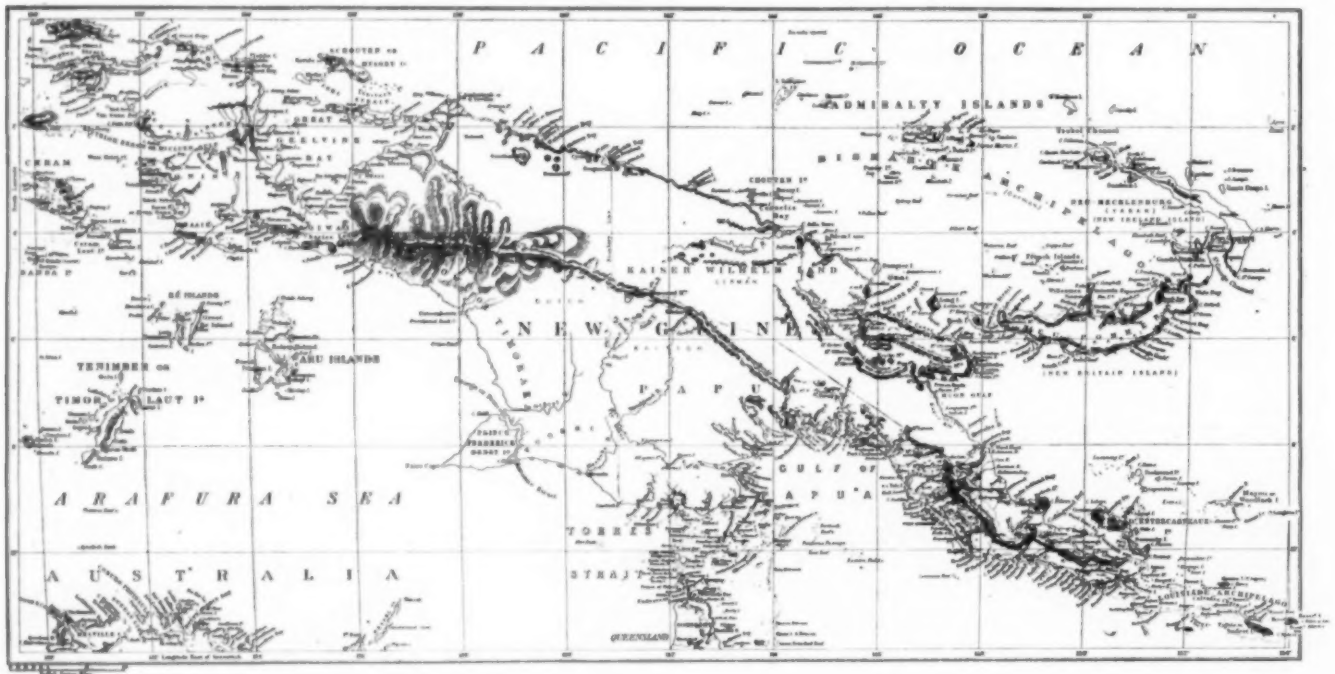
Dr. Marshall accompanied Sir Ernest Shackleton on his memorable journey towards the South Pole.

The Committee appointed by the British Ornithologists' Union to manage the affairs of the exploration of the Snow Mountains have entered into an arrangement with COUNTRY LIFE by which all authorised news of the expedition will be published in a series of articles which will appear from time to time in these columns. The articles will be illustrated by photographs taken by members of the expedition. The expenses of this very important and

AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

THE MEAT TRUSTS.

ACCORDING to a New York cable published in *The Times*, the agitation against the "tyranny of the Trusts" has lately assumed a double aspect. The million are curtailing their consumption of meat until prices are lowered, and the law is taking action against the offenders. It is announced that the "Grand Jewry" of Jersey City (I do not quite know to what English authority that would correspond) has indicted a number of persons for "manipulating market prices against the Common Law." Among the names

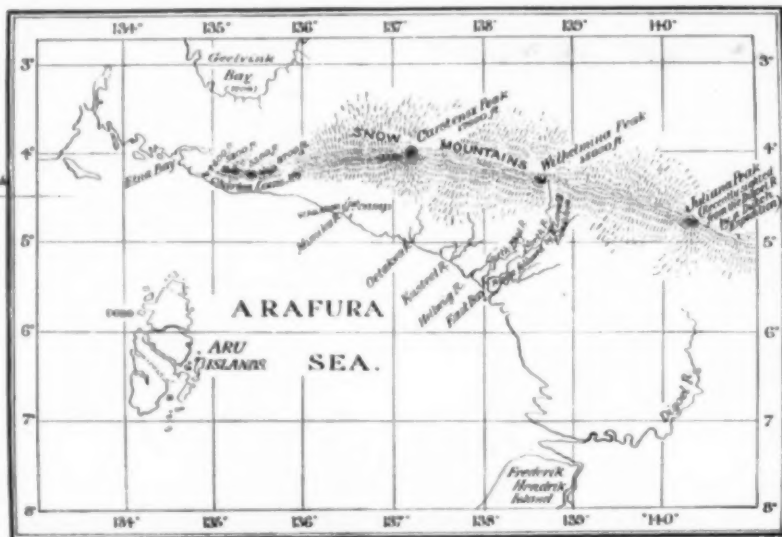


THE ISLAND OF NEW GUINEA.

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almost national undertaking, which has commenced its work under the favourable auspices of the British and Dutch Governments, are likely to prove very heavy, and much greater than was at first contemplated. At the present time the total amount subscribed is only sufficient to maintain it in the field for about a year. Though the initial expenses are the heaviest item, the monthly wages and upkeep are very considerable, and it is most desirable that the work should not have to cease through lack of funds. It is earnestly hoped that some of the readers of COUNTRY LIFE may be willing to come forward and offer substantial help. Subscriptions may be sent to the treasurer, Mr. C. E. Fagan, Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London, S.W. The difficulty in obtaining the funds necessary to carry out a great scientific exploration is surprising, even when, as in the present instance, it promises to be one of superlative interest. For some unknown reason there is a glamour attaching to Polar expeditions which enables them with much less trouble to raise ten times the amount required for the present undertaking, though the scientific results attained are nothing in comparison. Future expeditions to the South Pole are most unlikely to discover a single animal or bird that is not already well known. New Guinea, on the other hand, must be teeming with unknown wonders, and not the least of these must be the gigantic animal which is reported on good authority to inhabit the highlands. This monster, commonly known at Port Moresby as Monckton's "Gazeka," will be described in our next article, which will contain an account of the natives and a sketch of the Fauna and Flora as at present known.

mentioned are some very familiar to those who frequent the London meat markets, and the result of the forthcoming legal proceedings will create a very lively interest on both sides of the Atlantic. There is no doubt that public feeling is against these huge monopolies, and that most people would prefer that values should be allowed to shape themselves naturally in obedience to the ordinary laws of supply and demand. There is a doubt, however, and a very strong one, whether they are evils with which it is possible for the law to grapple. The American Trusts are composed of men of the boldest enterprise and greatest commercial skill, while the funds at their command are enormous. A battle between them and the Law Courts reminds one of that of Jack and the Giant. Still, the United States Legislature, at the instance of the late President, thought it necessary to try a fall with them, and if the new law fails to curb the power which now oppresses the mercantile world like the Old Man of the Sea, it may at least succeed in placing on the movement the stigma of public condemnation. It will be in the memory of readers that a few months ago a Departmental Committee sat in London to enquire into the action of the Trusts and its effect on the prices of meat. The report of that committee was inconclusive in the extreme; but, in spite of its doubtful tone, there was a plain inference that the establishment of the Trust system in this country would be a most unwelcome innovation to the consumers and producers alike. The Trusts are well known to be working here already, and it is an open secret that they pull the strings which make our foreign meat markets dance to any tune they choose to select. They know better than to parade their powers, and prefer to work quietly, if not with absolute secrecy. Some of my friends hold strongly to the opinion that they were the hidden cause of the late extraordinary slump in British mutton, which lasted nearly two years, and that the recent advance has also been the result of their action. I am not personally quite prepared to accept this view, because I do not believe the ramifications of the Trusts are as yet sufficiently extensive in this country;



SNOW MOUNTAINS, DUTCH NEW GUINEA.

Showing the first camp on the Mimika River and Carstensz Peak, the goal of the Expedition.

W. R. OGILVIE-GRANT.

but the danger that they will become so is a very real one, and it is high time that their growing power should be realised and, if possible, checked. Their mode of procedure in England appears to be that of acquiring retail shops for the purpose of forcing the sale of their own special goods; and that idea can scarcely be pleasing to British farmers. The American people are up in arms against the prices they are being charged for their meat, and say that values are artificial and quite unnecessarily high. Hence their very practical protest of abstaining from meat as a means of checkmating the Trust. It is very improbable that this movement will be sufficiently general or persistent to have much effect, while the blows aimed by the law are likely to be easily evaded. Are the whole body of consumers, then, to be at the mercy of the Trusts? A writer in the *Breeder's Gazette*, published in Chicago, answers this question in the negative, and points to co-operation between farmers and consumers as the one effective remedy. He says the former will be driven to have their own slaughter-houses and cold storage and their own town depôts. It may come to that, and even British farmers may be driven to follow their example. A. T. M.

ANTHRAX.

There seems, unfortunately, no room for doubt that the deadly disease of anthrax is becoming much more frequent in its occurrence than was formerly the case, and it is time that the subject was taken more effectually in hand by the Board of Agriculture with a view to stamping it out, so far as that may be possible. Farmers are dreadfully afraid of anthrax, and rightly so; but the trouble is that they can do little or nothing to ward off attacks coming from

animals left unskinned and is deeply buried in lime; all premises are disinfected, and no further outbreaks occur. That is good, so far as it goes; but the original cause of the trouble is left undiscovered, and, of course, what it has done once it may do again. This is where the farmer comes to a dead stop. Where did the infection come from and how did it come? Quite likely the dead animal—one of a considerable number—had been on the farm for months. It follows from that that it did not bring the disease with it, but that it was communicated by something on the farm. Inasmuch as the bacillus takes about seven or eight days to incubate, we may infer that infection took place about that length of time previous to the first indication of illness. The animal in question may—I have a case in mind—have been in the feeding-courts for several weeks receiving home-grown food and home-grown litter, but purchased cakes. In such a case, one is almost driven to blame the cakes as the carrying medium. That they should be responsible is not so unlikely as may at first sight appear. I have not seen it suggested that the bacilli are contained in the cake itself as originally made; but it has been pointed out that infection of the cakes might readily come from railway wagons which previously had been carrying hides and horns and the like, and had not afterwards been disinfected. So far as I am aware, there is no direct evidence to prove that the disease has been carried in this way; but, as I said before, little or nothing is known as to how it is conveyed from place to place, and infected railway trucks are a reasonable possibility. It is suggested that it be made obligatory on railway companies to carry hides and such-like articles in specially marked vehicles, and that these be properly disinfected at the end



W. Reid.

A MARCH BLIZZARD.

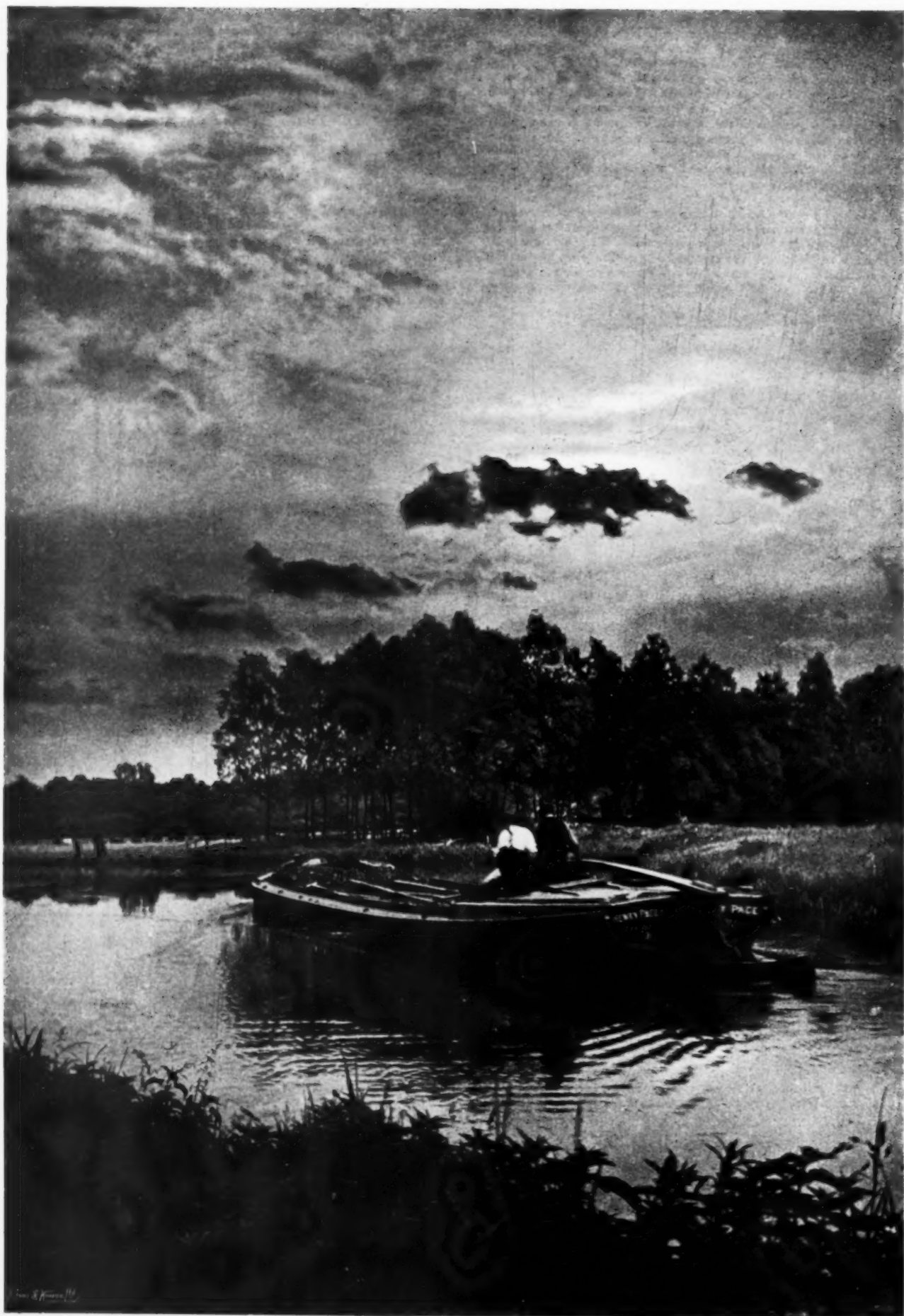
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outside the farm, because they do not know by what means the disease is spread; and even if they suspect some particular channel, they are unable, as a rule, to take any step to close it up. Horses and cattle are the most usual subjects of attack, although sheep and pigs may also fall victims; and, unfortunately, human beings are by no means immune, as many fatal cases testify. Only last week in the writer's own neighbourhood a shepherd died as the result of inoculation incurred while skinning a bullock which, events proved, was suffering from the disease. In the great majority of cases the man or the animal attacked succumbs in ten days or a fortnight after the disease has been communicated. The writer knows of two farmers who suffered from anthrax a score of years ago, and who ultimately both recovered; but these cases are the exception. Very frequently the person into whose blood the bacilli have found entrance is quite unaware of the fact; in a few days a pimple appears, on his arm it may be, but he pays no attention to it, and it is not until considerable swelling has taken place and pain forces his attention that he "sees about it," and then it is usually too late. A sick animal—frequently a fattening bullock—appears off his feed and has a heavy look; but there are many minor troubles which exhibit exactly the same symptoms, and nothing is thought of it. The beast dies, or is killed "to save its life"; anthrax is not suspected, or even thought of; but something else is blamed. It is bled and skinned, and the disease is thus given every opportunity to multiply and entrap other victims, not only on the same farm, but wherever infected material may go. When anthrax is suspected every precaution is usually taken to prevent its spread; the dead

of each journey. But, after all, feeding-stuffs are only one of the many agents which may be responsible for the transmission of anthrax, and in view of the loss to the agricultural community which the disease occasions, and, more important still, of the great danger to human life which its existence threatens, it is imperative that the matter should engage the serious and the immediate attention of the central authorities which have the charge of the public health and the oversight of the well-being of the farming community. J. C.

THE GRIP OF SWINE FEVER.

Farmers throughout the country will be pleased to note that the Government has at last determined to face the problem of swine fever rather than allow the present irksome and slipshod methods to continue until pig-breeding has been driven out of the country altogether. Sir Edward Strachey, Bart., the Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Agriculture, in reply to a question, announced that a strong Departmental Committee would be appointed to consider the subject of swine fever. Now it will be for the farmers to see that their views are properly set out before that Committee. On all sides, I believe, farmers would prefer real stamping-out measure, with slaughter and compensation, to the creating of big infected areas, which upset the whole pig trade of a county for years with hardly any good result following. But the worst is that farmers so seldom combine to set their views before these Departmental Committees in the proper manner. The Board of Agriculture is to be congratulated on the success of its efforts in freeing this country of pleuropneumonia, foot-and-mouth disease and rabies. E. W.



W. L. F. Wastell,

"THE WEARY DAY TURNED TO HER REST."

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TALES OF COUNTRY LIFE.

KING MIDAS.

BY

BRENDA ELIZABETH SPENDER.



THE INNOCENT had been crawling through the bushes in a slow and cautious manner, as befitted a fugitive from justice, and when,

in a sheltered dell among the lower woods, he came upon a little girl sitting with her face hidden in her hands—a small, dainty person with red-gold hair and a beribboned frock—he concluded at once that she was a fairy, and was more keenly conscious of the emotion of surprise than he had ever been before in all his twenty years of strange, changing, bewildered life. She was very quiet, and he, from the edge of the bushes above, watched her for a long ten minutes before he began to creep towards her, half afraid, yet drawn by a curiosity stronger than his fear. His foot slipping sent a rain of soft earth-clods pattering down against her dress; she raised her head, and he stood silent, a creature of abject fear, still staring, until she beckoned to him to come near.

"Who are you?" she asked.

He took off his ragged cap and clutched it against his breast, looked down at his awkward feet in their heavy boots and answered, "Peter."

"And what are you?"

The Innocent shook his head, not being sufficiently wise to imagine that he had any right to claim that he knew himself.

The child burst into a small, clear laugh.

"You don't know? Well, you're a man, anyhow, aren't you?"

"Am I?"

Peter looked himself over as well as the circumstances allowed and found the idea difficult to assimilate. Of course, he might be a man, since the young lady said so, but on the whole he thought not.

"What do you do, then, Peter?" asked his new acquaintance.

Peter rumped his hair. "I goes to funderals and I catches rabbits and birds, and I can walk so quiet as a grass-snake——"

"Snakes don't walk."

Peter blinked at the suddenness of the interruption, and his small companion waved an imperious hand.

"Come and sit here." She pointed to the moss at her side, strewn with the bright chestnut leaves which were falling all about her, and The Innocent scrambled down obediently and sat near her, scarcely a repulsive figure, only an awkward one, for the limitations that had left him innocent of knowledge had made him ignorant of sin. A man in body, a babe in heart and brain, he looked at the child beside him with a kind of awe, and made no remark, his mind being still fully occupied by the problem of the snakes.

"You go after rabbits, do you?"

"Yes, and pheasants and hares——" He stopped, uneasily conscious that his mother would not have wished him to admit so much, and stared more vacantly than before.

His mother was certain to have disapproved of his saying such things, for it was she who had sent him to hide in the woods and had told him to keep quite quiet and not shout or sing, even if the wind blew, because she had found out that the new gentleman at the Manor was very angry with him for catching his hares and rabbits, and was sending policemen to take him away and shut him in a little, cold room where there were no trees or flowers.

The whole matter was incomprehensible to Peter, for the old gentleman who had lived at the Manor before this gentleman came had been very good to him and had called him a "clever boy" when he brought home game for his widowed mother's often empty pot. But then he was a very old gentleman and very lonely, and had lived at the Manor House for so long that he knew everyone for miles around and all about them and took an interest in them in quite a personal sort of way.

"Listen, Peter." The little girl put her long-fingered hand on his arm and shook him gently. "When you're in the woods, will you look for my pussy cat? He has been getting wild lately,

and now he hasn't come home for two days. I'm so afraid that he'll go beyond our woods, and then someone may shoot him for poaching."

"And put him in the little, dark room? I know."

"Kill him, I mean—shoot him dead. I've run away and come here to look for him myself, but I can't do it. I can't walk fast on this rough ground, it hurts my foot."

"What makes it hurt?"

He peered down at her feet, and she drew them up to her and displayed a little, shrivelled leg in a black silk stocking and a clubbed boot. Peter bent over it wondering, but reverent, and put his big hand gently upon it, as though to touch it made it more real.

"It's thin," he muttered, puzzled, but somehow sympathetic. "It's thin, like a bird's leg, but it don't match. I tell you what it is: t'other's a greedy one and gets all the food. This one is starved——"

She interrupted him with a peal of laughter, throwing her head back against his shoulder, and after a bewildered pause he joined her with a doubtful chuckle.

"You dear old thing! You are the funniest person I ever saw. Will you come some day and let Daddy see you make me laugh?"

Peter grinned and nodded.

"And you'll go and look for Midas now?"

"What's your 'das?"

"My 'das? Oh, Midas! That's my cat; that's his name. King Midas, because he's golden and King Midas used to turn everything he touched into gold." Her small, pale face kindled with earnestness. "Peter, will you go and look for him now?"

"Yes."

"And bring him back to me at the house down there at the edge of the wood?" She made a backward movement with her hand.

"The Manor, d'you mean? Mr. Lyndsay's house?"

"Yes, I'm Lilliard. I'm Mr. Lyndsay's little girl."

Peter scrambled to his feet. "I won't go there. I won't go near him."

She interrupted him fiercely. "Then I shall hate you!"

She broke into a little wail of grief, and covered her face with her hands. The Innocent stood and watched her, an age-old struggle in his foolish heart between self and that something better which, strangely enough, had not been so nearly eliminated from his composition as it seems to be from that of many saner people. There was trouble in his eyes, but trouble felt, not understood, like an animal's pain, when he stooped and patted her hands.

"I'm going—do you hear? I'm going to get him now."

Guided by those instincts of his which sometimes had an effect curiously like that of reasoning, Peter made his way upward until he came to the big warren, and hid himself in the grass and lay in silence, sometimes sleeping, sometimes waking, while the day drew on towards its close. The denizens of the warren grew accustomed to him lying there inert and motionless, and bold bunnies dared each other to go within reach of his hand, the more forward spirits even leaping across his extended form.

Late in the afternoon he awoke; no scampering, white-tailed foolish things played around him now; one lay outstretched upon the sandy soil at the mouth of a burrow, and beside it crouched a magnificent tawny-coloured cat, his white under-jaw streaked with the rabbit's blood, his flat head raised above his prey, his green eyes fixed upon Peter, watching his every movement.

"That's him!" said Peter to himself, still without stirring a limb or twitching a muscle.

With infinite patience, in a succession of minute and cunning movements, he stretched out one arm and gathered a

long stem of dried, flowering grass from a tussock near at hand, and presently the cat, as he sat cleaning his face in the sunshine, quite reassured by Peter's silence, became aware of something rustling and buzzing across the sand a few inches from his face. He suspended operations to watch, and the black pupils of his great eyes began to move from side to side as he followed the piece of dancing grass in its gyrations. Suddenly it leaped up and struck him lightly upon the nose. He crouched down to the very earth, his paws scarcely showing beneath his ginger-coloured ruff, and not his eyes alone but his whole head moved in unison with the rustling decoy. He leaped upon it and, rolling and crouching across the sand and the grass tussocks, he followed it nearer and nearer to where Peter lay. His paws were on it, he was biting and tearing it in an ecstasy of playful savagery, and at that moment a hand descended upon his neck, and he found himself held tightly in Peter's arms.

"There's a beauty! Don't scrat, old gentleman!" said Peter, tenderly. With one rough hand he prevented the creature's escape, with the other he administered judicious rubbing to the big cat's silky throat and cheeks. "There, there, lie quiet now, and let's hear you sing."

His power over animals was as immense as it was unconscious and uncalculated, and soon the struggling, half-wild creature had become his friend, purring even when he rose with him in his arms and began to make his way down through the woods, pushing the branches on one side with his free hand, the great cat snuggled against his breast. The scarlet berries of a wild guelder rose switched back and struck his cheek, the strong, long sprays of the brambles interlacing across his way almost threw him down; yet still he hurried on. He came from the boulder region of bushes and brambles down into the true woods, where the great oaks and beeches stood far apart with the dead leaves and the moss at their feet; then someone who had been listening, very well pleased, to the noise of his heedless approach, stepped out from behind a tree and laid a hand upon his shoulder.

"Come along quiet, Peter, there's a good lad!"

The Innocent turned and beheld the mottled face of Luker, the village constable, and terror and surprise wrung from him a shriek of impotent fear. His lips began to twitch convulsively. Before the idea of resistance had formed itself into any definite resolve, he acted. His right hand shot out, armed with the hitherto untried strength of his manhood, and the astonished Luker fell backwards in an ungainly heap.

"We'll get there yet," The Innocent panted, running on. Luker was shouting behind him, but the Manor House gates were open, and Peter rushed in and up the avenue, Midas, highly indignant at such jolting, clawing and scratching as they went.

The great front door was ajar, Mr. Bains, the butler, tasting the weather from the step with that pleasant sense of proprietorship, exclusively the possession of the retainers of the landed gentry, when out of the dusk came a great, wild figure, hatless and emitting strange sounds. The force of its impact shouldered the stolid Mr. Bains to one side, and the intruder, darting past him into the hall, slammed the "front door of our country seat"—as Mr. Bains would have phrased it—upon his very nose.

Once inside the big, richly-furnished hall, with its glowing fire and its scent of hothouse plants, Peter stood panting with his back against the wall. Where was Lilliard? How should he find her in this strange place? He listened for Luker's approach. At the back of the hall a door opened, there was the sound of voices, and a little woman in shabby black came out, drawing down a tight veil from about a minute bonnet, for small bonnets had been the fashion when, as a favourite hand-maiden, Peter's mother had been married from this very house to big Dick Paybrance, the keeper, whom the poachers had "settled," as they put it, before she had been his wife a year. Mr. Lyndsay, serene in his warm study, and flanked by those treasured manuals of the Game Laws which delight the hearts and muddle the brains of county magistrates, had answered her prayers for her poor, half-witted man-child's pardon by enunciating the theory that "parents who plead the infirmities of their children and find those same infirmities very profitable to themselves were most unlikely to obtain much sympathy from law-abiding persons." He had scouted indignantly her trembling offer to send all Peter's trophies of the chase straight to the Manor House, and his ire had been roused by the inability of the wretched poor to comprehend that though a landowner may complain that he is robbed of game to such and such a value, its value to him is nothing from the instant that someone else has knocked out that vital spark which once made it a capital moving target in fur or feathers. The moments were identical in which Peter first became aware of his mother's presence at the far end of the hall and in which Mr. Bains, in the strength of wounded dignity, commenced a furious onslaught upon both the knocker and the bell.

Peter dashed towards his mother; she was the one being upon earth in whose power and love he trusted, and on his knees he put his free arm round her waist, still hugging the incensed and resisting Midas in the other, and the little woman bent her grey head with its minute bonnet over his quivering face. Mr. Lyndsay emerged from his study.

"What is all this noise, Mrs. Paybrance? And who is this?" Peter cowered closer at the sound of his voice.

It was Lilliard who answered, limping out from the school-room opposite with her patient governess bringing up the rear.

"It is Peter!" she shrielled. "He has brought my own King Midas home!"

She came close to The Innocent, and Peter, all bewildered, gave up his precious burden with a doubtful smile.

"Who is this young man, Mrs. Paybrance? I ask again."

Mr. Lyndsay put on his glasses the better to scrutinise this strange visitor. "He looks peculiar. Is he exactly *compos mentis*?"

"If you mean all there, sir, he ain't," said the mother, with The Innocent's head against her bosom and her hand stroking his blonde hair. "It's my son what I told you of, sir. I don't know what brought him here."

Lilliard's high voice cut in. "I do though, Mrs. Peter. I told him about my kitty-cat, and he promised to bring him back."

"I run—I run and he scratted," was Peter's contribution to the conversation, until Mr. Lyndsay had ejaculated:

"For goodness sake go and open the door, somebody, and tell the person who is ringing to go to Jericho!" Then entered Mr. Bains and P.C. Luker—Bains indignant, Luker plausible. Mrs. Paybrance, still clinging to Peter, felt her heart sink at this formidable array of damaging witnesses, but the case took a sudden and unexpected turn in his favour. He, the village natural, had shut Bains, Mr. Bains, the great Mr. Bains, out upon his "own" doorstep! To Mr. Bains's employer the humour of the idea was irresistible. It was with that plea that he justified himself for his subsequent conduct in regard to Peter Paybrance when his fellow-magistrates reproached him one by one. To himself he admitted another line of reasoning which had crossed his mind as he watched The Innocent crouching upon the many-hued Turkey rug, with his mother's arm around him and looking at Lilliard, his ugly face half shrouded by the masses of her bright hair. The picture had recalled some words of Mrs. Paybrance's appeal for her son:

"The Lord makes crooked minds as well as crooked bodies, sir, but it don't show so plain, and it's easier to call it sin."

All this happened some years ago, but Squire Lyndsay's friends have not yet ceased to envy him the possession of that tall and awkward under-keeper of his, in whose care the pheasants and partridges prosper and multiply exceedingly, even in the worst of seasons.

Mrs. Paybrance, who, rumour asserts, is growing stout, is of the opinion that Peter is rapidly becoming very wise. Certainly he is much steadier now, and being absorbed in the one kind of work for which, by a mysterious power known in the village as "inheritance," he is well suited, has ceased to attend the funerals. The days when he must shout and sing and go leaping through wood and meadow chasing the shadows of the clouds grow fewer and fewer as the habits of application take a firmer hold upon him, and the windiest weather now finds him still a faithful servant to Miss Lilliard, grown up tall and graceful and withal a sweet-faced lady, and a respectful if somewhat tyrannous guardian of the now infirm and ossified King Midas.

CATTLE-BREEDING IN DENMARK.

ENGLISH dairy-farmers ought to read the account of how herds of cattle have been improved in Denmark given by Mr. Mørkeberg in the newly-issued number of the Journal of the Board of Agriculture. There is much in the plans adopted in Denmark which might be utilised in this country. Dairy-farming, although now such an important industry, has not had a long history with our neighbours. It only came into prominence in 1850, and the improvement in the cattle dates from the eighties of last century. In their first shows the Danes were intent only on finding out what were the most profitable cattle, and did not take the trouble to have them shown according to their breeds; but a little experience showed them that this was a very crude method of procedure. About the year 1870 pains began to be taken to separate the two breeds which form the dairy herds of the country. These are the Jutland dairy cattle, chiefly found in Jutland, and the red Danish dairy cattle found in the islands. Attention was centred on these two breeds, each confined to its own district. At the time when the two breeds were kept separate at the shows prizes were awarded for the animals showing the typical characteristics of the breed. Then it became evident to the Danes that the individual breeder exercised a great influence, and the custom of showing classes of cows, which still continues, came into existence. In the early days it was not the custom to pay much attention to the bull, the nearest and cheapest being used till over two years of age, when he was sent to the butcher. As a consequence of this system the sire had passed out of existence before the merits of his progeny came to be tested. This led the State in the eighties to give further assistance by causing shows to be held of bulls more than three years old. The farmers were prompt to learn the lesson taught them. In

1887 only three hundred and seventy bulls were presented at these shows, but in 1908 more than twelve hundred. Another point worthy of notice is the introduction of the idea that the bull should be judged by his offspring. Prizes were not given to bulls more than five years old unless their offspring had been judged before the show and found satisfactory, as it was recognised that the quality of the calves was the best proof of the breeding value of the bull. Experience having shown that the best-bred animals came from certain herds, efforts were made to find what the herds were and to encourage their formation. The important object at their cattle shows was to draw attention to the best herds. It was found that only a few of the best animals were sent from each establishment, so a new feature was introduced—that of competitions between the best herds in the country. This, too, is a long process, as the competition endures over two years. A committee of judges visits the herd five or six times on the farms. They are assisted by young men who on every twentieth day during the two years visit the competing herds, weigh the milk of each individual cow, test its percentage of fat, weigh the fodder given to each cow and draw up a family herd book. Thus in the end the committee of judges is placed in possession of trustworthy facts about the competitors, and an authoritative award can be

made. The herds for which prizes have been awarded are called "breeding centres."

The advantage to the farmer is self-evident. A detailed report about each herd is published for his use, and he can consult the family herd book, in which the cows are ranged according to their maternal descent and information is given about the sire, dam, description, production and prizes of each animal. Thus the buyer has definite information to go upon in addition to his own judgment. This all began in 1884, and it was in 1894, when the Gerber transportable apparatus for estimating the percentage of fat in milk was introduced, that the system was complete. The State, which has always exercised a vigilant care over the dairy herds, in 1897 made a grant of four thousand pounds sterling for four years to assist them. To the best "breeding centres" as much as one hundred and fifty pounds could be awarded annually for each of the four years. The effect was striking. Many more herds were entered for competition, and the attention of the whole farming community was drawn to the importance of securing good bulls. Prices rose with the greater demand for good breeding animals. The State has now discontinued the grant and pays only for the administration of the competitions; but the competitions go on and preserve their popularity, while their good influence is undeniable.

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF BRITTANY.

SAINTE-BRIEUC owns its origin to a monastery founded in 480 by an English monk, Saint Brieuc, who fled to Brittany from the persecutions of the Saxons. This curious little piece of history I read in an old book I discovered among a pile of heterogeneous volumes, musty and fly flecked, in one of the small wooden stalls along the quays on the left bank of the Seine. Motoring some weeks

later in the neighbourhood of this picturesque old town I recalled the lines from the old book, as I came across the peasants in their starched caps that had the religious severity of ages upon them. Fashion has not influenced the peasantry of Brittany, but the head-dresses of the women in Saint-Brieuc are less austere than those of Plougastel. Although the monastery became the centre of a town attacked by the Lansquenets in the sixteenth century and by the Chouans at the time of the French Revolution, the women have never changed their mode of dress. They have no use for new ideas, their minds are on their daily work, on the scrubbing of the home, on the washing and ironing, the stirring and tossing of pancakes of rye that, with milk and flour soups, remain their principal food.

To the town of Saint-Brieuc on market days the peasants come from many a mile. Here the cart driven by man or woman brings the farm produce to be sold. Turkeys and chickens, alive and noisy, eggs, butter, apples and pears are deposited carefully in baskets that the women guard seated in a row in the covered market-place, waiting patiently for the moment when they can shake their skirts and walk away with their sous in their pockets, big pockets hidden beneath the wide folds of their short petticoat that only an expert hand could find. Through Lamballe we sped at seven in the morning, and "killed the worm," as is the custom of the country, with a bowl of coffee and a glass of brandy that the innkeeper, a weather-beaten woman in a black skirt and fringed cachemire shawl folded across her chest, and a neat little white cap, served from a monster percolating tin pot. The coffee was hot and strong so early in the day, but weakened as the hour advanced and the thrifty peasant refilled with boiling water the space that our supply had made in the enormous pot. We had had the benefit, as first-comers, of this brew, and I now understood the small price for a bowl as the water was added, and could picture the pale, tasteless pennyworth that would be forthcoming at the close of the day. Binic we passed at a snail's pace, for the village was astir and the narrow, winding road filled with peasant women, in their



W. G. Meredith.

IN FROM THE COUNTRY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

best black dresses, their heads all turned in our direction, their caps, like aeroplanes, floating in the wind. On again, through a place called Limoron, where all that was noticeable was a large board with monumental letters, calling attention to "The Continental Hotel," and we laughed as we looked on a building containing two rooms and a kitchen.

St. Quay we reached at half-past eight and found an hotel of unpretentious appearance, with a large terrace overhanging the sea. In the common room the tables were being laid for the midday meal by a sleepy-looking maid, with a coloured kerchief tied over her hair. In a corner of the room was a cottage-piano, where the daughter of the house, with her back towards us and her hair *à la* Morlena Kenwigs, was practising a Nocturne of Chopin, a future pupil of the Conservatoire, with ambition writ large upon her important little person. As we waited for the refreshment we had ordered we strolled into the sweet little garden, with wide beds of balsam

and petunias and bushy spiky lavender lining each side of the path. It was one of those misty mornings fore-shadowing heat; the air was already heavy with the scent of petunias, and the jingling piano did not encourage rest. There was little of Brittany at the hotel at St. Quay.

Yet we were not far from Paimpol, the quaintest and queerest of places between Cherbourg and Morlaix, where the peasants wash their linen by the roadside in an inlet of water walled like a Roman bath. Old women and young, and children not more than seven or eight years old, bring their board and

their soap, and kneel, and rub and rinse. We stopped to photograph the lively scene. "Permettez, Mesdames!" said my companion, lifting his hat, when one girl bolder than the rest raised her head and shouted laughingly: "Better give us a franc!" "One each!" called back my friend. "You would be dear at a dozen!" "Oh no! One for us all!" "Well, here are two to drink our health!" And with a cheer from the



W. G. Meredith.

GOING TO MARKET.

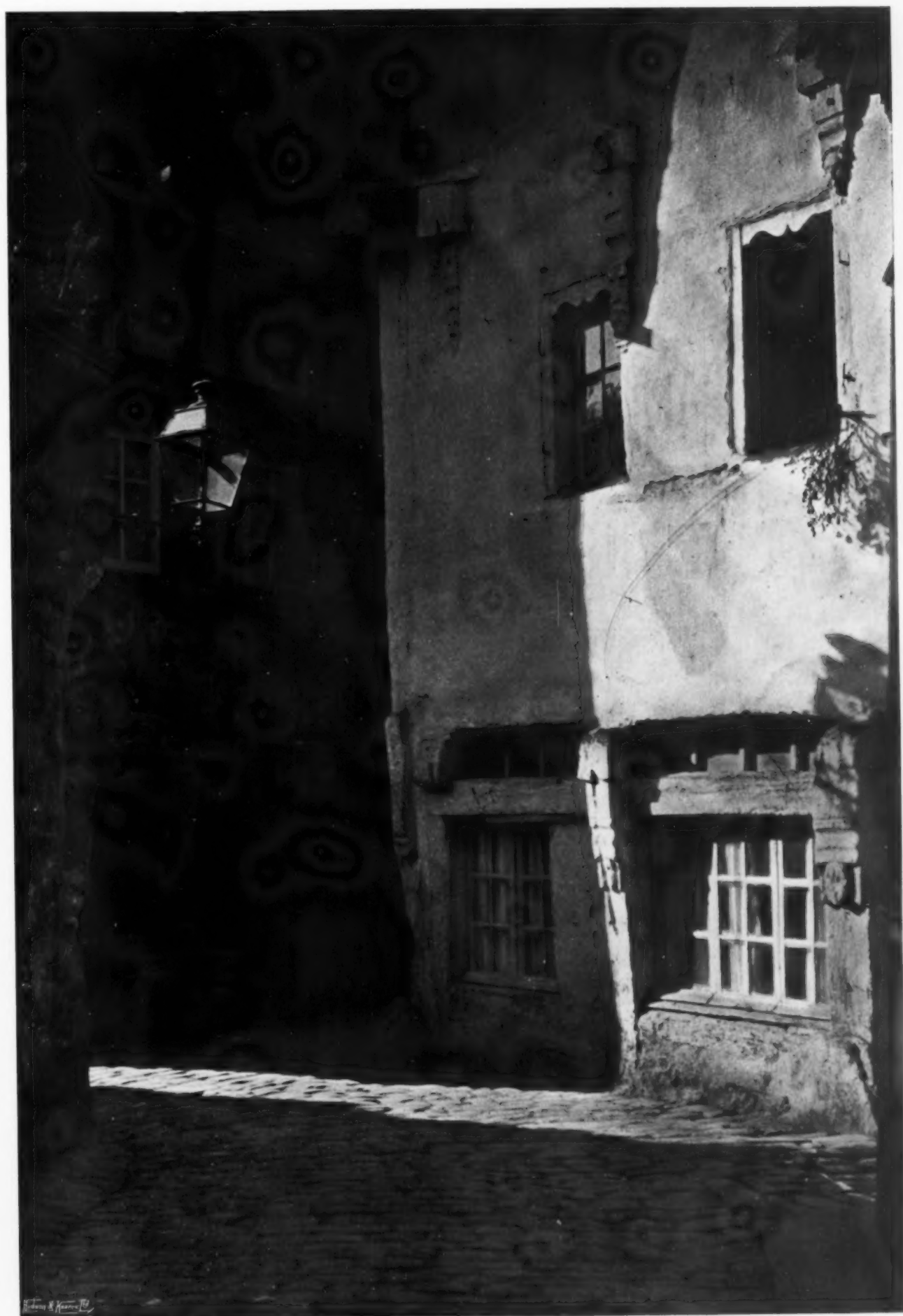
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WASHING BY THE ROADSIDE.

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AN INTERESTING CORNER.

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women we sped on, for the tide was rising and we had to catch the boat for the island of Bréhat, the little island that is causing patriotic Frenchmen sleepless nights, since the news has come that the greater part of it has just been bought by a German.

We had missed the boat and stayed the night in the best hotel in the market-place. After a dinner of *crêpinettes* (oh, those *crêpinettes*!) I was shown into a bedroom draped like a first-class funeral, with heavy tassels at the windows and over the bed, hangings of a material that had once been blue, but

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to the wondrous rocks, their faces turned to the flat-fronted hostelry, their heads bent over illustrated magazines. I wondered what had prompted these people, who "had eyes and saw not," to visit this primitive land. Along the narrow road, through a village of some dozen houses starting from the ground without step or paving stone, the low, brown roofs were seen as the road slanted downward; out into the open where farms flourished and women tilled the ground or dried their linen on the sunlit soil. Through a straggling path to the peacock tower, where the great boulders and fantastic pink rocks suggested weird monsters asleep, the light playing on their rugged crests like fairy forms skipping; these rocks that the peasants called pebbles (*cailloux*) as if to belittle them, and frighten them less.

The peasants' houses, hidden behind a ditch covered with a mass of bushes and trees, are always to be found in the lowest part of the country, in order that the waters that collect there should more quickly putrefy the straw, cane and gorse that the farmers use for manure. An outhouse covered with thatch contains the plough and the ordinary instruments, the threshing is done in the open air, and the grain placed in the loft of the farmhouse. The large kitchen that serves as living and sleeping room for the family is rich in three pieces of furniture. The first to be distinguished is the clock in its carved case, with its ornamental pendulum, that strikes the hours and half-hours twice, as it would seem it requires two strokes to rouse the peasant and impress on him the importance of the sound. This is, no doubt, a failing of the past, this inattention, and can, I suppose, account for the *da capo* we find so often in the music of classical composers who have to insist on the repetition of certain passages to impress the idea upon the lethargic listener.

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A SUNNY PATH.

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Around the house are fields and meadows, always surrounded by ditches, covered with white and black thorn, cane and gorse,

beds of violets, snowdrops, roses, wild hyacinths and flowers of exuberant growth and colouring in extraordinary variety. The air is delightfully perfumed, the land is enchanting, yet here the peasantry live like savages, unwashed, unkempt, except on market days, when they journey forth and mix with the world, peasants like themselves, richer or poorer, but peasants still, working the land, toiling, saving, to buy more; heaping their gains in hidden places, in the proverbial stocking, that the thinking Frenchman depletes, but cannot change.

FRANCES KEYZER.

IN THE GARDEN.

THE TALLER IRISES.

ONE of the most beautiful and extensive families in the world of flowers is the Iris, and the taller kinds are of great value in the forming of imposing groups in the border, woodland or by water-side. These notes are opportune, as this is the planting-time, and I shall soon be busy in re-arranging a border that has become exhausted after having been filled with the present varieties for some years. From my experience on a gravelly subsoil, the border having been well prepared to a depth of two and a-half feet, the Iris requires relifting and dividing once in three years, otherwise there is a distinct degeneration in leaf and flower. This border is filled, except for a few fragrant annual flowers, with the German or Flag Irises, with a background of Roses rambling over a rough oaken fence. Grass comes to the margin, and the Irises represent the best of the Flag-leaved forms, beginning in May with the blue German Iris, and followed by the grey-white kind of Florence (*I. florentina*); then a beautiful series of varieties, the soft yellow *flavescens*, the noblest of all the group, the blue *pallida dalmatica*, and others of the *aphylla*, *amena* and *neglecta* families, with flowers for the most part of varied shades of purple lilac and white. Numerous garden kinds are derived from *variegata* and *squalens* which have flowers of yellow and crimson, and of harmonious minglings of these with various tints of purple bronze and smoke colour. These shades are exquisite and, though without the dash, so to say, of the purple Flag, appeal to those with a sense of beautiful colouring. It is in such a border as I have suggested, in which there is a gradual succession of shades, beginning with the decided yellow of *flavescens* and passing gradually to the softer tones, that these Irises reveal their true beauty. In a solitary mass they are of little worth.

The old blue Flag, which cares little whether it is planted on a railway bank or in the woodland, is one of the most cherished of early flowers. I remember once wandering in a garden and, suddenly turning into a woodland path, coming face to face with the Flag, lining, if one may so express it, either side, hundreds of blue flowers lifting themselves above the little forest of broad grey leaves. This is the kind of picture that brings home to one the meaning of a garden, flowers where one least expects to find them and planted in the most beautiful ways.

But the German section contains something more than the blue Flag. There are the stately *pallida* and its even statelier variety *dalmatica*; *Darius*, rich yellow and purple; *Gracchus*, primrose yellow and crimson; *Mme. Chereau*, white and blue, the Iris sold largely in the flower markets in early summer; *Maori King*, golden yellow and crimson; *Mrs. Darwin*, white, veined with violet; *Queen of May*, soft rose with a suspicion of lavender; and *Victorine*, white and deep purple. These are always a joy in my garden during June days.

Tall Irises for the border are *aurea*, which rejoices in loam, the colour of the flowers indicated by the name; *ochroleuca*, or *gigantea* as it is also called, the spikes of snow white flowers rising to a height of six feet; *Monnieri*, primrose yellow; the deeper-shaded *Monaurea*; *Monspur*, which is of blue and yellow colouring; and *Dorothy Forster*, the flowers of blue shades. These may be grouped in the border, or planted in masses by water-side, *ochroleuca* and *Monnieri* in particular; but a section that delights in moisture is that known as the Siberian or *sibirica*, which the late Mr. G. F. Wilson planted with such success with Kämpfer's Iris round a pond in his then experimental garden at Wisley, now the property of the Royal Horticultural Society. The flower is not large, but a soft blue, and every plant gives an abundance, which results in a cloud of colour, reflected on the water's surface. It may well share company with the Japanese Iris, as it blooms earlier, and thus a succession of Iris flowers—all too short—is ensured. Of the Siberian Flag, there are the white-flowered *alba*; *orientalis*, one of the most beautiful of all its race, of deepest purple; and *Snow Queen*, which is white, as the name suggests. All the Irises previously named may be planted now in good loam, if possible; but whatever the soil is, thorough preparation is necessary, with a layer of manure below the roots, but not in actual contact with them.

It is not given to everyone to grow Irises on the scale that is followed in the Royal Gardens, Kew. There an "Iris Garden" has been formed, and it is a feast of colour when the flowers have reached their fullest beauty. Mr. Bean, the assistant-curator, in his history of these gardens, writes of this beautiful feature: "At Kew a piece of lawn about an acre in extent is devoted to them alone. The northern exit from the Rock Garden opens on to it. How charming a spot it is when the Irises are in blossom, with the old, ivy-covered museum in the background! . . . It consists of twelve large beds, thirty-two feet by twelve feet, and ten circular beds twelve feet in diameter, all cut in the grass. Each large bed is planted with several distinct kinds belonging to one section of the genus. The most popular sections are *germanica*, *pallida*, *squalens*, *variegata*, *amena*, *neglecta* and *pumila*."

It is only the want of space that prevents me growing every species and variety in the family. I hope to write of the bulbous Irises in my next notes; but the section that I have described is considered first, as this is the season to plant. E. T. COOK.

THE PASQUE-FLOWER.

AMONG the Windflowers or *Anemones* we find some of the most charming of our early spring-flowering plants, and the Pasque-flower, *Anemone Pulsatilla*, is not the least beautiful and pleasing member of this large family. At the present time it is making a fine picture in the more open parts of the woodland or in bays at the foot of the rockery, positions which seem to suit it to perfection. This *Anemone* is a highly-refined flower, each purple blossom nestling in its involucre of silken, silvery green, thread-like leaves. Although a native of Great Britain, it is by no means a common plant in a wild state, and the cultivated forms have larger and richer-coloured flowers than the type. At Kew, near the old ice-house, large clusters of it are planted freely among the hardy Ferns, and each spring, before the new fronds of the Ferns appear, the Pasque-flower sends up its blossoms in profusion, and these provide a pleasing contrast to the russet brown of the old foliage of the Ferns. The plant seems to appreciate a deep-rooting medium that is freely impregnated with chalk. In addition to the purple-flowered type, there is a white-flowered variety that is obtainable under the name of *Anemone Pulsatilla alba*. This is at present a rather expensive plant, but it forms a very pleasing companion to the purple-flowered specimens. Roots of both can be purchased from most hardy plant specialists, and can be planted either in autumn or spring. In planting, however, anything approaching formal arrangement must be strictly avoided, as it is essentially a plant for grouping in an irregular manner.

THE SWAN RIVER DAISY.

Now that the time for sowing annuals is with us, it may be useful to draw attention to the charming little Swan River Daisy, *Brachycome iberidifolia*. This slender-growing plant never fails to elicit praise from all who see it in flower; and yet one rarely finds it cultivated except in those gardens where little-known plants are treasured. It is an easy plant to grow, and will thrive in almost any kind of soil. Seeds sown in fine soil in the open about the second week in April will produce plants for flowering late in the summer. The Swan River Daisy forms a rather tufted plant about one foot high, and each branch is crowned with dainty, Daisy-like flowers about one inch in diameter. These are bright, deep sky blue in colour, the centre of each being a paler shade of blue, and the colour is in pleasing contrast to the bright green of the slender stems and foliage. Although not generally recommended for the purpose, this annual is an excellent little plant for providing cut flowers, the slender stems and dainty flowers allowing it to be arranged in a most graceful manner. In addition to the rich blue-flowered plant, there are others with paler blossoms and one with white flowers, but the original plant is the prettiest of all. H.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WITCH HAZEL.—HAMAMELIS MOLLIS.

The Hamamelises, or Witch Hazels, as they are popularly called, comprise a few species which, with one exception, are natives of China or Japan. They are deciduous shrubs, greatly prized for their floral wealth, which they contribute in the shortest days of winter from the bare stems of the plant. Of these, however, *H. mollis*, the subject of this note, distinctly outclasses the other varieties, is of more recent introduction, and might be termed a glorified form of *H. arborea*, as both flower at the same period. The curiously interesting, strap-like flowers usually begin to unfurl before Christmas, and remain in good condition for fully two months. Though so delicately constructed, they seem to withstand all damage to which they are subjected at this season from the vagaries of the weather. They are rich yellow, with a chocolate marking in the centre of the flower. *H. mollis* is quite hardy, but prefers an open position where it will receive plenty of sunshine. In leaf it is quite distinct from *H. arborea*, which, as I have already stated, it resembles in flower, having much larger foliage, covered on the under side with a dense tomentum. It is an excellent shrub to plant as an isolated specimen, and creates a beautiful effect if massed together in a bed in an open position in the woodland. E. B.

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The old blue Flag, which cares little whether it is planted on a railway bank or in the woodland, is one of the most cherished of early flowers. I remember once wandering in a garden and, suddenly turning into a woodland path, coming face to face with the Flag, lining, if one may so express it, either side, hundreds of blue flowers lifting themselves above the little forest of broad grey leaves. This is the kind of picture that brings home to one the meaning of a garden, flowers where one least expects to find them and planted in the most beautiful ways.

But the German section contains something more than the blue Flag. There are the stately *pallida* and its even statelier variety *dalmatica*; *Darius*, rich yellow and purple; *Gracchus*, primrose yellow and crimson; *Mme. Chereau*, white and blue, the Iris sold largely in the flower markets in early summer; *Maori King*, golden yellow and crimson; *Mrs. Darwin*, white, veined with violet; *Queen of May*, soft rose with a suspicion of lavender; and *Victorine*, white and deep purple. These are always a joy in my garden during June days.

Tall Irises for the border are *aurea*, which rejoices in loam, the colour of the flowers indicated by the name; *ochroleuca*, or *gigantea* as it is also called, the spikes of snow white flowers rising to a height of six feet; *Monnieri*, primrose yellow; the deeper-shaded *Monaurea*; *Monspur*, which is of blue and yellow colouring; and *Dorothy Forster*, the flowers of blue shades. These may be grouped in the border, or planted in masses by water-side, *ochroleuca* and *Monnieri* in particular; but a section that delights in moisture is that known as the *Siberian* or *sibirica*, which the late Mr. G. F. Wilson planted with such success with Kämpfer's Iris round a pond in his then experimental garden at Wisley, now the property of the Royal Horticultural Society. The flower is not large, but a soft blue, and every plant gives an abundance, which results in a cloud of colour, reflected on the water's surface. It may well share company with the Japanese Iris, as it blooms earlier, and thus a succession of Iris flowers—all too short—is ensured. Of the *Siberian Flag*, there are the white-flowered *alba*; *orientalis*, one of the most beautiful of all its race, of deepest purple; and *Snow Queen*, which is white, as the name suggests. All the Irises previously named may be planted now in good loam, if possible; but whatever the soil is, thorough preparation is necessary, with a layer of manure below the roots, but not in actual contact with them.

It is not given to everyone to grow Irises on the scale that is followed in the Royal Gardens, Kew. There an "Iris Garden" has been formed, and it is a feast of colour when the flowers have reached their fullest beauty. Mr. Bean, the assistant-curator, in his history of these gardens, writes of this beautiful feature: "At Kew a piece of lawn about an acre in extent is devoted to them alone. The northern exit from the Rock Garden opens on to it. How charming a spot it is when the Irises are in blossom, with the old, ivy-covered museum in the background! . . . It consists of twelve large beds, thirty-two feet by twelve feet, and ten circular beds twelve feet in diameter, all cut in the grass. Each large bed is planted with several distinct kinds belonging to one section of the genus. The most popular sections are *germanica*, *pallida*, *squalens*, *variegata*, *amœna*, *neglecta* and *pumila*."

It is only the want of space that prevents me growing every species and variety in the family. I hope to write of the bulbous Irises in my next notes; but the section that I have described is considered first, as this is the season to plant. E. T. COOK.

THE PASQUE-FLOWER.

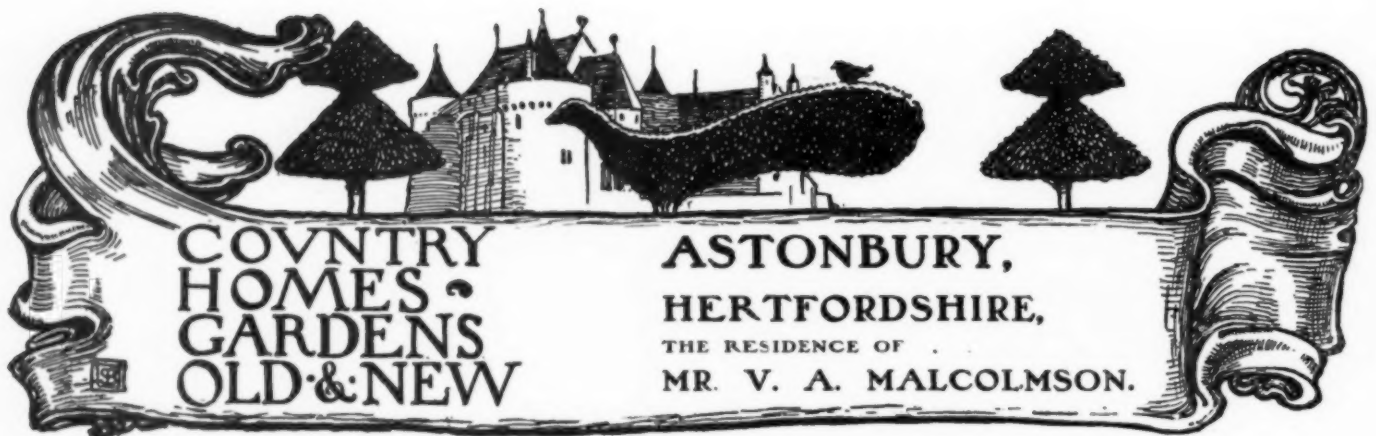
AMONG the Windflowers or Anemones we find some of the most charming of our early spring-flowering plants, and the Pasque-flower, *Anemone Pulsatilla*, is not the least beautiful and pleasing member of this large family. At the present time it is making a fine picture in the more open parts of the woodland or in bays at the foot of the rockery, positions which seem to suit it to perfection. This *Anemone* is a highly-refined flower, each purple blossom nestling in its involucre of silken, silvery green, thread-like leaves. Although a native of Great Britain, it is by no means a common plant in a wild state, and the cultivated forms have larger and richer-coloured flowers than the type. At Kew, near the old ice-house, large clusters of it are planted freely among the hardy Ferns, and each spring, before the new fronds of the Ferns appear, the Pasque-flower sends up its blossoms in profusion, and these provide a pleasing contrast to the russet brown of the old foliage of the Ferns. The plant seems to appreciate a deep-rooting medium that is freely impregnated with chalk. In addition to the purple-flowered type, there is a white-flowered variety that is obtainable under the name of *Anemone Pulsatilla alba*. This is at present a rather expensive plant, but it forms a very pleasing companion to the purple-flowered specimens. Roots of both can be purchased from most hardy plant specialists, and can be planted either in autumn or spring. In planting, however, anything approaching formal arrangement must be strictly avoided, as it is essentially a plant for grouping in an irregular manner.

THE SWAN RIVER DAISY.

Now that the time for sowing annuals is with us, it may be useful to draw attention to the charming little Swan River Daisy, *Brachycome iberidifolia*. This slender-growing plant never fails to elicit praise from all who see it in flower; and yet one rarely finds it cultivated except in those gardens where little-known plants are treasured. It is an easy plant to grow, and will thrive in almost any kind of soil. Seeds sown in fine soil in the open about the second week in April will produce plants for flowering late in the summer. The Swan River Daisy forms a rather tufted plant about one foot high, and each branch is crowned with dainty, Daisy-like flowers about one inch in diameter. These are bright, deep sky blue in colour, the centre of each being a paler shade of blue, and the colour is in pleasing contrast to the bright green of the slender stems and foliage. Although not generally recommended for the purpose, this annual is an excellent little plant for providing cut flowers, the slender stems and dainty flowers allowing it to be arranged in a most graceful manner. In addition to the rich blue-flowered plant, there are others with paler blossoms and one with white flowers, but the original plant is the prettiest of all. H.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WITCH HAZEL—HAMAMELIS MOLLIS.

The *Hamamelises*, or Witch Hazels, as they are popularly called, comprise a few species which, with one exception, are natives of China or Japan. They are deciduous shrubs, greatly prized for their floral wealth, which they contribute in the shortest days of winter from the bare stems of the plant. Of these, however, *H. mollis*, the subject of this note, distinctly outclasses the other varieties, is of more recent introduction, and might be termed a glorified form of *H. arborea*, as both flower at the same period. The curiously interesting, strap-like flowers usually begin to unfurl before Christmas, and remain in good condition for fully two months. Though so delicately constructed, they seem to withstand all damage to which they are subjected at this season from the vagaries of the weather. They are rich yellow, with a chocolate marking in the centre of the flower. *H. mollis* is quite hardy, but prefers an open position where it will receive plenty of sunshine. In leaf it is quite distinct from *H. arborea*, which, as I have already stated, it resembles in flower, having much larger foliage, covered on the under side with a dense tomentum. It is an excellent shrub to plant as an isolated specimen, and creates a beautiful effect if massed together in a bed in an open position in the woodland. E. B.



ASTONBURY is a sixteenth century house of no great size or splendour but of remarkable dignity. It gives the idea that its builder was accustomed to work in a big manner, and had founded his style, his forms and his proportions under the shadow of the great houses that began to arise in the Eastern Counties on the reintroduction of brick architecture in the fifteenth century, and continued to be built in the native manner, only slightly tintured with the imported classic, during the whole of the Tudor régime. The majority of these houses are gone, but Layer Marney and Oxburgh still exhibit the style in its earlier manifestations, while Blickling shows that the Renaissance had gone far towards establishing its principles when the first of the Stewarts mounted the English throne. That tendency appears strongly in the Astonbury staircases, which were additions made in James I.'s reign; but in its main lines and in much of its details the house calls to mind the earlier examples that have been cited, and produces the impression that it was designed as one side of a great quadrangular building erected when Henry VIII. was King. In all probability it arose ere that monarch died; but whether it represents its builder's full scheme or is merely part of a larger plan never completed, it is more difficult to decide.

Aston is a Hertfordshire parish lying between Stevenage to the north and Watton to the south. After the Conquest it was

part of the immense possessions of Bishop Odo of Bayeux; in the twelfth century it passed to the Abbey of Realing and so continued until the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The Abbey, or its tenant, certainly had a building on the site of the present house. Rough stone piers, forming no part of the post-Dissolution plan, were found during recent renovations, and the line of a Gothic arch may be observed in the flint walling low down in the central part of the south elevation. While the monks held the Aston Manor, that of Woodhall, in the contiguous parish of Watton, passed to a branch of one of the families that acquired the surname of Boteler, or Butler, from holding hereditary office in the household of our Norman kings or their great barons. The descendants of the "Boteler" of Ranulph, Earl of Chester, as well as the corresponding officer of the Earl of Leicester, obtained baronies, being called by writ to the House of Lords of the Plantagenet kings. Earl Ranulph's Botelers became Shropshire landowners, and the head of the family rose to be Lord Boteler of Wem in 1275. Sprung from this stock was Ralph Boteler, who married Katherine Peletot, the Woodhall heiress, in the fourteenth century, and their descendants held the manor for four hundred years. For long they thrived. The heads of the family under Tudors and Stewarts generally obtained knighthood and one of them a peerage. Under the earlier Royal house, moreover, the number of their manors increased. When



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THE NORTH OR ENTRANCE FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Henry VIII. and his courtiers turned their eyes from their depleted coffers on to the wealth of the Church, Sir Philip Boteler ruled at Woodhall. He had succeeded his father in 1514, and in 1540 he obtained a grant from the Crown of the Aston property of the suppressed Abbey of Reading. The latter year is of importance in any attempt to fix the date of the building of Astonbury. The illustration of the hall shows, on the right, part of an oak doorway. Like all the work here, it exhibits a fine and free-handed use of the native tree. The massive frame

intervening years, although very considerable alterations were subsequently made. The portion for which Sir Philip appears to have been responsible formed an unbroken rectangular building about one hundred and fifteen feet long and thirty-two feet wide in its exterior measurements. The recent extensive overhauling and drainage excavations have produced no evidence of the removal of any projecting portions when the Jacobean alterations were made. Yet a house of such strongly-marked Gothic type as this one must originally have been, and,



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THE WEST GABLE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

has pilasters carved out of the solid and supporting the depressed Tudor arch. The spandrels are decorated with foliage and shields. The shield which is shown in the picture bears the Cross between Mulletts of the Drurys, while the Boteler arms appear in the opposite spandrel. Now, Sir Philip Boteler married a daughter of Sir Robert Drury, a Suffolk knight, and this doorway is, as it were, the document on which the builder and his wife signed their name and acknowledged their deed. Acquiring the manor in 1540, Sir Philip died in 1545, and it is a legitimate assumption that Astonbury arose during the

indeed, still is, can hardly have been intended to have no wings, unless, as has been already suggested, a quadrangular plan was aimed at. The death of Sir Philip so soon after he began building would account for the stoppage of work, as his successors may have preferred the old family home of Woodhall. The walls up to first-floor height are fully three feet six inches thick. They are, except where the older flint was retained or re-used, of narrow red bricks two and a-quarter inches wide, and an air of dignified solidity is given by the massive moulded work of the recessed window openings. The window frames and

mullions are not, as was very usual in the Eastern Counties, of carefully-shaped and moulded bricks, but of oak. This was used with the utmost liberality, and given the proportions and mass of Gothic stonework. The window frames are fully a foot and the mullions nine inches in depth, all grandly moulded out of the solid. The main entrance is on the north side, and symmetry was observed in designing this principal elevation. The door was central and three four-light windows flanked it on each side, while a

also is the porch, for the old one had disappeared. Its footings, however, remained to be built on anew, while marks in the wall determined the height of the reconstruction. The door opened into a hall, to which the original form and size have once more been given by the removal of partitions. Where the two oak posts have been left the screen must have stood. There has been, at different times, so much interior rearrangement that it would be rash to lay down the law as to the original plan; but the



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THE EAST GABLE AND THE ANCIENT WALL OF THE ENCLOSURE. "COUNTRY LIFE."

row of seven ran along the first floor. All but two are transomed. The variation in sill height, which marks the two exceptions, may have arisen from the cellarge arrangement. The untransomed window to the right of the main entrance is not original. A door had been inserted here when the house was cut up into tenements, and the present window is a careful replacement by Messrs. Forsyth and Maule, to whom was entrusted the work of making the house once more habitable. Their

position of the four chimney-stacks indicates roughly both the number and the size of the principal rooms. Symmetry was again considered in the placing of these chimney-stacks, there being one at each end and a pair rising on each side of the central south opening. Unless this exceptionally-shaped house was exceptionally disposed, this opening must at first have been a doorway, for an outdoor exit at either end of the screen passage was the rule. The builder paid great attention to his chimneys,

which, in every part, and at each point, are fascinating examples of the clever and apt use of brick of which our fifteenth and sixteenth century builders were masters. The arched openings to fireplaces are finely moulded and proportioned, that in the hall being eight feet across. In the kitchen the opening is fourteen feet wide and spanned by a massive oak beam. In this stack a curious arrangement of superimposed ovens was found. All the stacks are cyclopean structures four feet deep, even on the upper floor, although that measurement is reduced to three feet where they emerge from the roof. The solid stack thereupon ends and acts as the base for a row of detached shafts, composed of elaborately-wrought brick and terra-cotta. The latter is formed into spikes projecting from the angles of the octagon caps, and the hardness and durability of the material may be gauged from the fact that such delicate and outstanding details have, for the most part, survived for three and a-half centuries, a few only having been replaced. The shafts are of varied patterns, which are cut out of the substance of the brick. They compare favourably with the best East Anglian examples, such as Hengrave and Seckford, which are contemporary buildings.

Sir Philip, having reached the thirteen-foot height which he had determined on for his hall and other ground-floor rooms, changed the character of his walls. Brick, indeed, was continued upwards as the material of the gabled ends, which are so largely composed of the chimney-stacks. But the upper part of the side walls is only about fourteen inches thick, and though now of brick, may once have been timber-framed like all the interior partitions. The great renovations which have just been carried out under



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THE NEW OFFICE WING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the supervision of Messrs. Forsyth and Maule have revealed much that was hidden, and have enabled these gentlemen to form correct views as to the character of the original building, and of the Jacobean alterations. The precise date of the latter, however, is not discoverable, and there is no heraldry to help us. It has already been suggested that Sir Philip left Astonbury unfinished when he died in 1545, and that neither his son nor grandson went on with the work, preferring to live at Woodhall. The grandson, another Sir Philip, died in 1606, and was succeeded by his grandson Sir Robert. It is noticeable that with him the names of the owners of Astonbury begin to appear in the register of Aston parish, though all continued to be buried at Watton. Under the heading of baptisms we find the entry,



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THE SOUTH OR GARDEN FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

"1620 Jane Bottler, da. of Sir Robert Botteler, Knt." She was his only child, and married Lord Belasys, the Hertfordshire estates passing at her father's death in 1622 to his brother Sir John, three of whose children were baptised at Aston. We may therefore conclude that these two brothers lived at Astonbury, which had been repaired and added to by the elder during his period of possession between 1606 and 1622. The evidence of material and of treatment tends to show that he replaced or built anew the upper walling above Sir Philip's thick brick and flint walls. He carried up a nine-inch brick wall and strengthened it by an internal oak framing. The posts of this framing formed the inner jambs of the window openings, but the window frames themselves were set in the brickwork. Very few

therefore, a tessellation of different men's work. The south side is almost equally complex and even more perplexing. The two projections start, like the main block, with flint walling, and one of them has, at the base, some quite early Tudor arched apertures. Yet from top to toe their outer walls are thin, while the inner wall which partitions them from the main block is of the great thickness which distinguishes the lower section of Sir Philip's work. There may have been some sort of excrescence at this point in his time, but there can be little doubt that the projections took their present form when Sir Robert determined to introduce two staircases of ampler size and greater presence than had been in vogue when the house was built and the newel type still prevailed. The

accompanying illustrations have an especial value in that they represent these staircases as they were and not as they are. For most of the work of renovation that has been carried out at Astonbury and even for the changes and additions that have been made to fit it for modern habitation we have nothing but praise. Wherever the professional advice of the architects employed has been followed, the result shows a due appreciation of the spirit and the value of the historic monument that was being dealt with, and a laudable determination to sustain them. Unfortunately that advice has not always been followed. Though both the stairways are ample and well wrought, the eastern or principal one was given, at the time of its erection, additional touches that marked it out as a thing of state. Paint was a favourite decorative medium with both our Gothic and Renaissance builders. The stonework of churches—nay, even the marble and alabaster of tombs—was thus adorned when the increased costliness could be met. The oak work of great houses was similarly treated. Remaining examples of this interesting manifestation of the higher craftsmanship are comparatively rare. The eighteenth century was fond of painting over it in white, while the nineteenth century covered the white with oak graining. All survivals, therefore, are highly precious, and it is such survival which gives its great value and fascinating interest to the Kederminster pew and library in Langley Church which were described and illustrated in COUNTRY LIFE last July. Of equal value was the Astonbury staircase when it offered the appearance represented in the illustration. The house had long been ill-used. The east end, where this staircase is situate, had been at one time inhabited by labourers. The painting was therefore not so well preserved as that of Langley. Still it was there, and where not exposed to wear and



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THE EAST STAIRCASE AFTER RESTORATION.

"C.L."

of the upper windows, however, are original, for some of those to the south have just been introduced for the very desirable purpose of obtaining sunlight in the house, while the range of seven to the north are of wrong material and wrong proportions. They are Bath stone interpolations of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, the brick architraves and straight arches around these windows have every appearance of belonging to the Palladian period, as does the bold moulded brick cornice above them. They seem later than the four gables, and yet these were an alteration from the original design, for the roof timbers show distinctly the change made when they were added, and broke the long line of the eaves. The north side, which hangs together so well, and at first sight appears like a synchronous composition, is,

tear was in very good condition indeed. The delightful scrollwork of Italian type on the strings stands out clearly even in the illustration, which does not show its colour. The pattern was of a reddish brown tint. It would seem that it was not done *in situ*, for it was on a thin pinewood board affixed to the underlying rough oak string. The rest of the decoration was of simpler type—no doubt the performance of the local craftsman. But the whole of the hand-rails, balusters, newels, brackets and other members were coloured in red, blue, green and brown in geometric forms, as may be seen on the half-posts and lofty obelisk finials that are set against the wall to balance the constructive newel-posts. As the principal decorative effect was to be produced by paint, the forms of the woodwork were

comparatively plain, though all of them are shapely and dignified. The arched bases to the obelisks and the balls on which the latter stand deserve particular notice. This precise design of obelisk was frequently used in James I.'s day, and may be seen in stone at Rushton on the additions made to that place after its purchase by Sir William Cokayne about 1620. So exceptional a staircase in so exceptional a condition was, indeed, a priceless possession, to

and that he does not always have the last word. Thus despite the architect's pleadings, the Astonbury staircase has been robbed of all that gave it distinction. Stripped clean of its original decorations, the oak has been smeared with oil, which gives a hot tone and a thick texture. The other staircase—that which, though called the service stair, has such splendid finials to its newel-posts—was found covered with several



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THE EAST STAIRCASE WITH DECORATIONS UNTOUCHED.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

be tenderly treated and lovingly preserved. It gave added distinction even to so fine a bit of old work as Astonbury. The conviction that in the care of Messrs. Forsyth and Maule it was not only safe, but that any absolutely necessary repairing and cleaning, and even retouching, would be carried out with reverent hand, was a real comfort to lovers of old workmanship. But they forgot that an architect is not omnipotent

coats of modern paint. Quite legitimately this was removed, and the oak was revealed of right tone and open grain. Very unnecessarily it was then "restored," new patches supplying the place of missing details and cracks being slipped with oak wedges. Then the oil treatment was resorted to. This ruining of the tone and texture of oak was evidently considered to be "the thing" here, for we find it again on much wainscoting,

It seems, however, that better counsels now prevail, for some old woodwork which the other day was being fixed in the sitting-room was of a delicious cool grey colour and showed up the feather of the wood in excellent manner. It is to be hoped that this section of the woodwork will be taken as a model, and that every effort will be made to bring back all the rest to the same condition. Such delightful old-world rooms as the hall and sitting-room that are illustrated deserve careful study of the best

ground floor now used as a fowl-house" as containing the best example. Nothing of the kind remained when the house passed into the present ownership. Such fragments of oak wainscoting as were found about the house have been collected into the dining-room, where the most elaborate of the arched fireplaces may be seen. Astonbury was originally a house of a few large rooms. We moderns need many small ones. And so it was found absolutely necessary to divide up into partitions the long gallery which



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THE WEST STAIRCASE AS IT WAS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

methods and the most informed taste, so that nothing may jar, no detail of form, colour or arrangement may detract from the excellence of the general composition. The care which the architects have bestowed on these rooms can best be gathered by comparing their present aspect with older views, such as appear in Mr. Cussans' "History of Hertfordshire," published in 1877. He speaks of "carved panelling of cedar wood" as yet remaining under coats of whitewash, and he cites a "small room on the

ran from end to end of the top floor. It was skilfully arranged in the roof construction. The purlins of the main roof were finely moulded, and appeared as a cornice where the coved plaster ceiling met the walls. There was no other detail or decoration, but the effect was impressive. The great transomed windows in the end gables and the four lesser ones to the north, the two fireplaces and the entrances from the two staircases gave great character to an apartment of over a hundred feet in length

The partitions are easily removable, so that if at any time less bedroom accommodation were needed the old arrangement could be revived. The other alternative would have been a higher and larger new office wing. But, apart from the additional cost, this course would have lessened the effect of the original structure. Messrs. Forsyth and Maule are to be complimented on the modesty of their western annex. In bringing an old house possessed of any merit into line with modern requirements, the first principle to be laid down is that the form, character and composition of the original structure should not be marred, dwarfed, or obliterated by the size or elaboration of necessary additions. There should be nothing added that draws attention away from the old to the new. Nothing could be better than the way this principle has been observed in building the Astonbury office wing. Its lowness adds to the height and massiveness of the main block. Its simplicity throws into relief the beautiful detail of the sixteenth century chimney shafts and mullionings. Yet its good form and the right choice and use of its materials make it harmonise perfectly with the old work. See the apt handling of the little screen wall, raised in the centre to form a doorway. It is difficult to conceive how anyone having this proper treatment before him could set up the utterly wrong forecourt walls of which the photographer has thoughtfully spared our readers anything more than a glimpse. Even that will be enough to



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THE SITTING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

convince them that the architects of the office wing had nothing whatever to do with it. It mars the whole composition. It destroys the agreeable sensation which the dignified front of Astonbury gives to the approaching visitor. It is showy and elaborate and attracts the eye away from the central and worthy object on to its poor and ill-contrived details. It is a pleasure to leave this side of the house and enjoy the fine old walls which

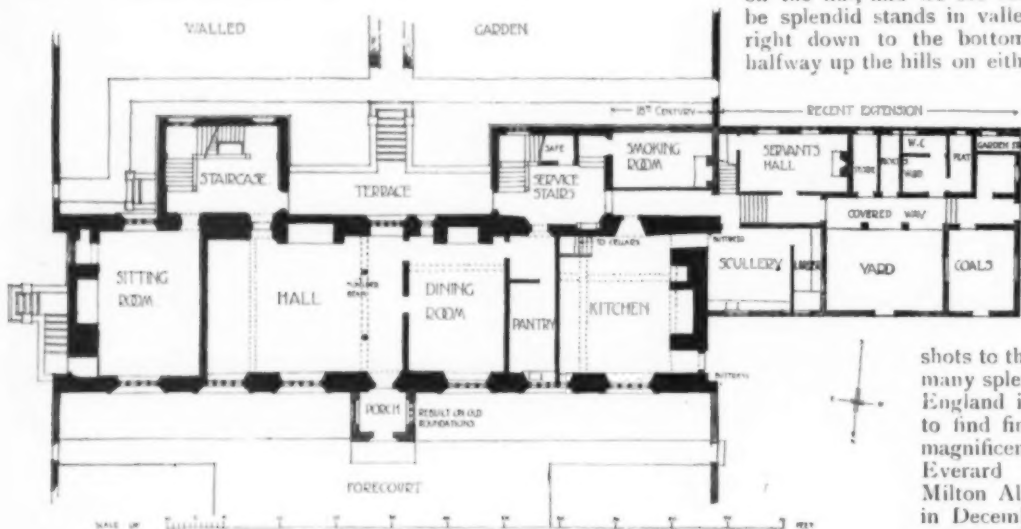


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THE HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

form part and parcel of the picture of the south front—a picture which will be of a most complete and satisfying kind if careful and sympathetic garden treatment is adopted in the area enclosed. Astonbury has so much that is good that the best should be meted out to it. The least fault stands out as a scar. A wrong touch leaves a stain. To deal with such a possession is a responsible task; there should be no uninformed experimentalisation. Careful action after due counsel taken should be the



GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

rule. There are hundreds of places where little thoughtless acts and trivial additions really do not matter. What has been adversely criticised here might be in keeping there, or at least it would pass unnoticed amid a crowd of its own kind. Astonbury forces them on the attention and calls for their removal. T.

THE PLANTING OF PHEASANT COVERTS.

II.—ON HILLY GROUND.

OF course, the problem of the best possible form of covert plantation for pheasants in hilly country is largely solved by the same means that solved it in the level lands. There is nothing like the same difficulty, where there is plenty of undulation at command, in inducing the birds to give good shots at a height over the guns as where all has to be done on the plane. It is the level country that really taxes the ingenuity of the general in charge of the campaign. For all that, it is well that the great and primary maxim should be observed with modified strictness even here as in the more difficult operations—that the birds should, generally speaking, be pushed out quietly away from their home, only those going back over the beaters or breaking out at the sides being shot, and no heading line of guns being formed until they have been shepherded into some place where the guns can be posted below them and between them and their home, when they can be driven out by beaters coming to the covert from the far side, and brought back flying high and fast towards their home wood.

It is not at all easy—it is hardly possible—to lay down formally a plan for the planting of coverts in this hilly country, as it was possible on the flat, because the undulations are, naturally, almost infinite in their variety of gradient, contour and aspect. All these qualities make a difference to their capacity as possible homes for pheasants, and arrangements have to be modified not only in consideration of the merits of each hillside considered by itself, but also of the direction in which it lies relatively to its neighbours. We can, in course of years, command the species and forms of covert on each hill; but we cannot command earthquakes and volcanic forces to change for us the lie of the everlasting hills. We must make the best of these as we find them.

For the home covert it is quite certain that a slope should be selected. This is of such first importance that other things should be subordinated to it. Also it should have a warm, sunny aspect. Not only will the birds fare greatly better there than in a damp, dark covert, but in the latter they will not stay. A majority of them will be found there, no doubt, in the feeding hours; but when they have learnt the hours for their meals they will repair elsewhere to greater comfort for the rest of the day.

Just as it is not possible, amid the folds of the hills, to lay out your coverts with the same formal precision as on the flat, so

neither is it possible to drive your pheasants with the same certainty to any distant goal. The bird seems to consider a steep hillside as giving him a good take off for a flight; and if he sees a pleasant covert on the hillside opposite, is very likely to be up and away to it before the beaters approach, while you are still expecting him to use his legs for some hundreds of yards further. The great majority of the birds will, it is true, unless pressed too hard, run while they have covert on hilly ground as on the flat, and we see scores and hundreds of what might be splendid stands in valleys spoilt by bringing the coverts right down to the bottom, instead of cutting them short halfway up the hills on either side. It is inconceivable that this folly can be perpetrated as it is by owners who seem to have the proper way of making their pheasants fly well marked out for them by Nature or by accident. The ideal is a hanging wood on either side of the valley, with the covert coming down only so far that birds crossing on the wing from one to the other shall be high enough to afford really sporting

shots to the guns below. In Wales there are many splendid stands thus arranged; and in England it would not, perhaps, be possible to find finer examples of the same kind of magnificent sport with pheasants than at Sir Everard Hambro's place in Dorsetshire, Milton Abbey, where the King was shooting in December last. It is scarcely feasible in country of this broken nature to centralise so many birds in one home wood as can safely be done on more level ground, both because it is not easy to find a hillside which has the right aspect sufficiently extensive, and also because, as already noticed, you cannot control your birds, when driving them, nearly as perfectly as in flat coverts. They will break out and be "all over the place." They travel so fast down hill in one quick skurry that you hardly know where they are. And, further, the direction which you can induce the birds to take when on the wing, with any advantage to be gained from the lie of the ground, is strictly limited. Everything points to the advisability of driving them across the valley. Your choice, therefore, for the position of a home wood, and also of a wood or woods from which to drive them back to it, are rather limited by the circumstances of the case; and the best possible arrangement seems to be that of the home or feeding wood of the birds on the sunny side of the hill, where they will be pleased to stay, and the covert into which they may be driven for the rise, but where they will not stay, on the opposite, the cold and shady side. You cannot so well carry out the system, which is quite feasible in more level country, of having a very large number of birds in one extensive home covert; they will be much better divided up and distributed in several, each to be treated separately, each with a covert or coverts to which they may be shepherded for the rise.

It is quite possible, in this case also, to adopt the principle of the conduit pipe, or narrow covert previously described, along which the birds may be induced to travel from the one larger covert to the other; but it is less necessary here, because the covert on the opposite hillside is the obvious one for the birds to fly to when they are beaten from the home wood towards it, and it is even of dubious advantage to have this conduit at all, because, as said before, pheasants on this broken ground cannot be depended on for their line of flight, and it is possible that several may prefer to slant across into this narrow way on the return journey rather than make the bold flight across the valley over the guns.

In case of smaller coverts, such as these, where the wood on the northern slope is the obvious and perhaps only one into which the birds will fly when pushed out of the home wood, it is less essential that no heading line of guns should be placed to intercept them even while they are being driven away from home. They have not at all the same tendency to turn back at the sight of guns posted in the valley far below them as when the guns are on their own level on the flat. The flight will be bolder and more readily undertaken on the homeward way than on the outward; but it is not likely that many of the birds, either coming or going, will swing back when they see the guns thus far below them. Over an open valley, such as this, they will be accustomed to fly, rather than to run, when they wish to pass from the one wood to the other, and will naturally take the same means of transit when the beaters are pressing them out. But if the wind is strong in their faces it is a risky experiment to line up the guns in the valley when they are being sent away from home. Down wind, or in calm weather, there is little risk if the home covert comes to an end well up the hillside, at a good distance from the shooters.

A hint may be given as to the best species of trees for planting at high elevations. The common spruce and the

Scots fir are the kinds frequently chosen, and the former has the merit of being a very good roosting tree; but neither of these will grow at high altitudes nearly as fast as the birch, alder, beech or willow. The willow has the advantage of being a quick grower itself, and also of forming an excellent wind-shield for the other kinds. Its merits as covert are not generally as highly appreciated as they deserve. It harbours a number of insects which are useful as food for the birds, and though it has not the form of growth that seems generally most liked by pheasants for roosting, they have been found to roost in it very readily.

The following are Mr. Fryer's comments on this subject: "It is no use planting two sides of a valley which are some way apart with the idea that pheasants will fly high across from one to the other; they more often than not follow the ground in their flight. They are very funny in this respect, and will often fly in a most 'contrary' way. I have in my mind one covert with a low alder carr below it. When driven out to it they simply skim down. Out of the carr to the higher ground they fly quite well. A first-rate place to plant is a high steep bank or along a hillside, with intermediate gorges or ravines occurring here and there. These make splendid stands, especially for the lower guns. I remember a case where the bottom gun of one of these stands peppered the top guns while shooting at a bird which was

practically out of range for him. But the best place of all to plant is the same class of hillside which at the end of the spur takes a bend outwards. Drive the birds along into this end, and then flush them so that they fly across the intermediate low ground, where the guns will be placed, back to the hillside they have been driven from. This class of shot, to my mind, constitutes the most difficult shot that any British game-bird gives. The gunner can, sooner or later, find the spot when shooting at high pheasants coming straight over, but when curve is added to height it is a very different matter. The ratio of the curve is never quite the same—hence the difficulty. In planting a wood in these positions it is first of all necessary, as in the case of low ground, to ascertain from observation what trees will grow best, even down to seeing what grows best on a north side and what on a south. Observation is the true road to success here, as perhaps in most things, but the south should always be the side chosen, if possible, both for the trees and birds.

"In planting all coverts where shooting is the only object the flushing-point should be the first and main consideration, just as the position of the green on a golf course should be first selected. From there work backwards. Both these considerations are often neglected, which leads only to disappointment."

THE LINCOLN & GRAND NATIONAL.

FROM every point of view the Lincoln Meeting last week may be said to have been a pronounced success. In the course of the three days' racing two hundred and seventy horses were saddled—seventy-eight on the first day, one hundred and fifteen on the second and seventy-seven on the concluding day. Unless it be to note that, of the runners in the Battisany Plate,

Glensky and Master Hopson are likely to win races before long, Monday's racing calls for little comment, and we can pass on to that of Tuesday, when the various enclosures were crowded with people anxious to watch the decision of the Lincolnshire Handicap. Paddock inspection of the seven-and-twenty runners for the big race showed that in point of condition the majority of them—such, at all



W. A. Roush.

JENKINSTOWN.

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events, as were really supported in the market—were fairly up to the mark, Valens and Christmas Daisy being among those that will probably do better later on. Robinson had got Cinderello looking remarkably well, and, in fact, beyond the marks of plasters on his shins, he showed few traces of the breakdown in both suspensory ligaments, which has been a source of such anxiety to his trainer. Mr. Schiff's horse is a fine specimen of a powerful weight-carrying thorough-bred of the hunter type, and although it was two years since he won a race, he was, it may be remembered, very smart as a two year old. It is, I should think, doubtful if he has regained his best form, for it was only after a long battle with Forerunner II. that he won the big race on the Tuesday of last week by a neck; and inasmuch as Mr. Hare's horse ran nine times last year without winning, that form does not look very grand. I quite expect the "Lincoln" form to be turned topsy-turvy before the season is far advanced. Among the beaten horses were Valens, on last year's running quite entitled to rank among the classic horses of the year; Christmas Daisy, winner of a very sensational Cambridgeshire in November last; Norman III., a winner of the Two Thousand Guineas; Hayden, a winner of the Jubilee; Duke of Sparta and Kaffir Chief, previous winners of the Lincolnshire Handicap; to say nothing of such as Delirium and Vigilance, both of whom will, I fancy, win races very shortly. With four-furlong racing I have no sympathy, and would gladly see races of this description once more relegated to oblivion; but inasmuch as they are approved by the powers that be, they cannot be passed by without notice. Such a race is that for the Lincoln Plate, for which three-and-thirty two year olds were saddled, the principal survivors of the scrimmage being Mr. H. Lytham's filly, Glorielle, by Friary out of Plumage; Mr. L. de Rothschild's Badoura, by St. Amant; and Lord Durham's colt, by Simontault out of Stolen Armour. Of these the former, running her race out with no little determination, won by a length and a-half, Lord Durham's colt being beaten into third place by about three lengths. It is interesting to note that the winner is by Friary, a stallion for whom such a scientific breeder as Colonel W. Hall Walker has always had a good word to say. Then, too, Badoura is, I think, the first of St. Amant's stock to win; and it may, by the way, be as well to note that Lord Durham's colt was very unlucky at the start, and may, therefore, be expected to do better when he next comes out. Of recent years the subsequent career of winners of the Brocklesby has not been of much interest; but none the less, the two year old runners for the race are eagerly scrutinised when they make their appearance in the paddock, there being perhaps a hope that one of these days another



W. A. Ruck.

CINDERELLO.

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Donovan or The Bard will stand revealed. I am afraid that no youngster approaching in class either of these celebrities was among the seventeen that we saw saddled for this year's Brocklesby. Foot Guard, the winner of the race, is a racing-like colt, and has sufficient length and scope to make it probable that he may yet improve. He is by Grey Leg out of Bar the Way (10), by Rightaway, was bred at the Compton Stud, is owned by Lady de Bathe and trained by Surgeon-Captain McCabe, by whom he was sent out in rare fettle. Of the other runners the best may perhaps be St. Amaranthe, a nice lengthy bay filly by St. Amant out of Tathwell Lassie.

The Lincoln Meeting over, a move was made to Liverpool, and early on Thursday morning I went for my annual walk round the famous Aintree Race-course. It may have been fancy, but the fences looked stiffer and more forbidding than ever, and that they had at least been well built up was shown by the fact that two of our light-weight riders were able to run about on the top of them. It may, however, be taken for granted that if the Messrs. Topham do not allow any cutting down of these obstacles, neither do they permit them to be unduly built up; and, moreover, the Liverpool fences have a character to keep up! That they were able to do so, the runners for the Stanley Steeplechase soon discovered for themselves, for of the eight that started all but two had found the floor before the winning-post was reached, the two to stand up being Rathnally, a nice lengthy young 'chaser belonging to Mr. O. H. Jones, and Tattler II., the property of Major Kincaid-Smith. Of the dozen two year olds saddled for the Molyneux Stakes, Wooden Wedding, winner of the race, is, I am inclined to think, not only the best, but the best two year old we have yet seen out. He is a strong-backed, sturdy colt by Laveno out of Queen of the Plains, and were it not for a rather feminine look about his head, would be a very taking-looking youngster. He can, at all events, go, and ran, too, after the fashion of a stayer.

Bayardo excepted, Mr. Lytham's good-looking colt, Lonawand, was last year somewhere within 6lb. or 7lb. of the top of the two year old form; and that he has wintered well we saw by the ridiculously easy style in which he played with his eight opponents in the Union Jack Stakes—served to some extent by "condition." Rathlea so strung out his adversaries in the Liverpool Spring Cup that it may be as well to accept the placings in that race with some reserve.

On Friday all we wanted to see was the race for the Grand National, and, if possible, to inspect the runners before they sallied out to take part in the severest ordeal a 'chaser can be called upon to face. Five-and-twenty in number, no better-trained lot of 'chasers were ever got together; but in many—one must, I am afraid, say the majority of them—class was sadly wanting. Jenkins-town I did not see, but of the others the most taking in appearance seemed to me to be Judas, Caubeen, The



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RATHNALLY.

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Lurcher, Jerry M., Albuera and Fetlar's Pride. Little purpose can be served by entering into a detailed account of the race, and it may suffice to say that at the very first fence, Judas, The Lurcher and Shady Girl fell, and that when Odor landed first over the water, and the second half of the race commenced, only nine of the five-and-twenty runners were "standing up." Of these, four more fell by the way, and when finally, served by his great advantage in the weights, Jenkinstown (10st. 5lb.) gained the winning - post three lengths in advance of Jerry M. (12st. 7lb.), with Odor (9st. 8lb.) beaten into third place by about the same distance, these with Carsey and Fetlar's Pride represented the sole survivors of the fray.

As I write the prospect of racing is overclouded by the weather signs. Correspondents in various parts of the country tell of sudden gales of wind and still more sudden blasts of snow that break in on the sweetness of "balmy spring," prolonging winter into that part of the year when we are inclined to listen to the singing of birds in hope that the dreary months have indeed gone; that, as the poet has it, "The birds of spring are on winter's traces." Need it be said that

the recluse who penned this very sporting simile was a sportsman only in imagination. But most things go by contraries in this singular world of ours, and I have often noticed that sporting language comes most glibly from the lips of non-sportsmen.

TRENTON.



M. J. SUSSKIND PUTTING THE WEIGHT.



A. C. B. BELLERBY JUMPING 5ft. 8in.

but he was expected to do as well this year as last, when he won the 120 Yards Hurdles. The competitors were favoured



A. C. B. BELLERBY WINNING THE HIGH JUMP.

with excellent weather, cold but bright, with no more than a breeze blowing. Indeed, the wind was so slight that it could not have affected the racing at all. Probably the finest performance of the day was the winning of the Three-Mile

UNIVERSITY SPORTS.

ON Saturday last Oxford and Cambridge held their forty-seventh annual meeting at the Queen's Club. The result was a considerable surprise to most judges of athletics, as the forecast had been in favour either of a draw or of a very narrow win for Cambridge. As a matter of fact, Cambridge achieved a very decided victory by winning seven out of ten of the events. The result is all the more interesting, inasmuch as before this meeting took place the two Universities were level, with twenty-two wins and two ties each. Thus Cambridge has now a lead of one. The weakness in Oxford is traced largely to the absence of L. C. Hull. It was very doubtful whether he would be able to stand the strain or not. He sprained a tendon in training, and did not recover sufficiently to compete. The effect of this was that his place in the Quarter-Mile had to be filled by G. R. L. Anderson (Trinity), who, by the by, had also strained himself,

Race by A. E. Cator (Kemble). He won by about three hundred and fifty yards, in the splendid time of fourteen minutes forty-five and four-fifths seconds, just a second and a fraction of a second less than the time recorded for the distance by F. S. Horan (Trinity Hall, Cambridge) in 1893. The race was distinguished by the feature that Cator, after running two miles, paced by R. E. Knight, in the third mile actually increased his speed and finished with a sprint that, taken with the fact that he was not at all distressed afterwards, points to the circumstance that he could probably have done even better had he been at all closely pushed. As a matter of fact, he was winning all the time, and S. C. Waldegrave, the representative of Cambridge, although a fine and plucky runner, had no chance.

The keenest fight was that in the racing for the Mile, won by W. Gavin (Trinity). A. M. Brown (Oriol), the first of the



H. R. RAGG WINNING THE 100 YARDS.

G. H. G. Shepherd, but those who thought so were doomed to disappointment, as the Oxford representative lost ground from the beginning, and the race was won by H. R. Ragg (St. John's), who was second string to Cambridge. In the Weight Putting, a close contest was expected, as M. J. Susskind, a Cambridge freshman, had done wonderful things in practice, and was thought likely to test H. E. Putnam (Christ Church), an Oxford Rhodes Scholar. The Cambridge man won easily, with a throw of thirty-seven feet, and afterwards did an exhibition throw of thirty-seven feet five and a-half inches. The Oxford man who was next best only did thirty-six feet four and a-half inches. In Throwing the Hammer Putnam came out easily first. His best throw measured one hundred and forty-six feet eight inches, which left the Cambridge competitors, H. J. Bower and F. A. Trenchard, far behind. Their lengths were respectively one hundred and twenty-six feet and one hundred and twenty-two feet.

In the Half-Mile Race Cambridge romped home. P. J. Baker (King's) went off at a great rate, and after half the journey was covered was well in front. He won ultimately by forty yards, and the only other competitor who completed the distance was T. R. Harley (Brasenose).

It was expected that the Quarter-Mile would produce a very keen contest when it was known that Hull was unable to take part in it, he being probably the best at the distance. The race was a very keen one, and W. T. Wetenhall (Caius) had the

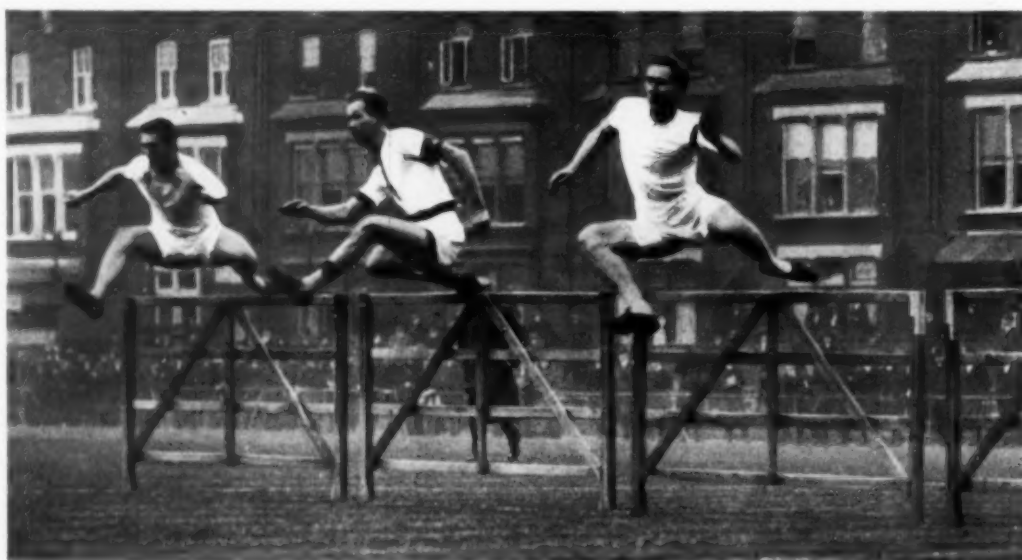


THE FIRST LAP IN THE MILE.

Oxford team, made a gallant bid for victory, and he and Gavin passed and re-passed each other in the early stages of the race; but at the beginning of the last lap the latter went off splendidly, and won by ten yards, in four minutes twenty-six seconds.

It was expected that A. C. B. Bellerby, the Cambridge president, who won the High Jump last year with five feet eleven and a-half inches, might possibly be beaten, owing to the fact that he was suffering from a weak ankle, but a good deal of trust was placed in L. V. Ludinszky, who in practice did five feet ten inches, which was better than any of the Oxford team had done. As a matter of fact, he and Bellerby tied for first place at five feet eight inches. The style of Bellerby's jump will be understood from a glance at the unusually fine photograph of him which we publish.

In the 100 Yards Race it was thought that, in the absence of L. C. Hull, Oxford would still have a good chance of obtaining the victory with



OVER THE HURDLES: M. C. MACDONALD THE WINNER.

better of C. Howard Smith at the beginning and maintained it to the end. The time of the winner was fifty-one and one-fifth seconds. Before the trial actually occurred, A. H. Godfrey (Oxford) and F. G. Buchanan (Oxford) were favourites for the

Long Jump; but A. J. D. Murray (Trinity), a student from South Australia, beat all the others with a jump of twenty-one feet five and a-half inches, A. C. B. Bellerby being second with twenty-one feet three and a-half inches.

LITERATURE

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING is known less than he deserves to be, and many people will be glad to obtain *The Works of Sir John Suckling* (Routledge), edited by Mr. A. H. Thompson. There are two pieces of his universally known one occurring in his play "Aglaura," "Why so pale and wan, fond lover?" and the other the incomparable "Ballad Upon a Wedding." Every schoolgirl knows the lines:

Her feet beneath her petticoat,
Like little mice, stole in and out,
As if they feared the light.
But O, she dances such a way!
No sun upon an Easter-day
Is half so fine a sight.

Another passage in the same poem received a new lease of immortality when Fielding used it to describe Sophia Western:

Her lips were red; and one was thin,
Compar'd to that was next her chin
(Some bee had stung it newly).

But the spirit and go of the piece are not fully represented by these passages. We do not wonder that Suckling was a favourite with Harry Fielding. "Natural, easy Suckling," Congreve's Millamant calls him. His life in some respects bears a resemblance to that of the "father of the English novel." It differs, however, in one essential point. Fielding was born to impecuniosity, Suckling was born rich. His father was Master of Requests to James I., and in 1622 was appointed Comptroller of the Royal Household. He was a man well able to take advantage of this position, and before that time, indeed, had accumulated manors, fee farms, and advowsons in various parts of the country. On the death of his father the poet inherited estates in Suffolk, Lancashire and Middlesex, and was well able to cut such a figure as suited his imagination. That he liked to cut a figure was one of the most salient features of his character. It is said that he was educated at Westminster, but the point is doubtful. He matriculated, however, at Trinity College, Cambridge, in July, 1623, and probably at the University gained more enjoyment than scholarship. After his father's death he was introduced to the highest official circles in the country, where the gay, witty, exquisitely-dressed youth became a favourite. Then he went abroad for a number of years, visiting Paris and Italy, and coming back to England in 1630, when he was knighted by the King at Theobald's.

We have many hints of the kind of life he led then. He played cards, dice and bowls, and must have won and lost great sums of money at them. He is said to have invented the game of cribbage. Aubrey says, "His sisters came one day to the Peccadillo Bowling Green, crying for the fear he should lose all their portions." Fortunately Aubrey has left us a word-picture that enables us to realise the individuality of the man:

He was incomparably ready at repartee, and his wit most sparkling when most set on and provoked. He was the greatest gallant of his time, the greatest gamester both for bowling and cards; so that no shopkeeper would trust him for sixpence, as to-day for instance he might by winning be worth £200, and the next day he might not be worth half so much, or perhaps be minus nihil. He was of middle stature and slight strength, brisk round eye, reddish-faced and red-nosed (ill-liver), his head not very big, his hair a kind of sand colour. His beard turned up naturally, so that he had a brisk and graceful look.

One of his favourite haunts in London was the Bear Tavern at the Bridge Foot, whence he dated his letter "From the Wine Drinkers to the Water Drinkers." To complete his character as the gay cavalier he ought to have been a terror at the duello; but his courage was no fiercer than that of the Fat Knight. An incident that his friends laughed at seems to have occurred in the summer of 1634. He, with the approval of Charles I., with whom he was a favourite, had been paying assiduous court to an heiress, the daughter of Sir Henry Willoughby. The lady did not favour his advances, however, and appealed to another suitor, Sir John Digby, to help her to get rid of them. Sir John Digby, who was a tall man and an expert swordsman, proceeded at once to London, where he met the poet and administered to him a sound drubbing. Suckling is said never to have drawn his sword on this occasion, and naturally for some time after he favoured a quiet life. It is also said that in 1639, when he went on the Scottish campaign, he did not show much of the Berserk spirit. The men of his equipment must have been a vision of splendour, if we are to judge of the descriptions extant of the costly bravery of scarlet coats and plumes and white doublets; but rumour had it that they did not charge the enemy very fiercely, and Sir

John shared in the retreat from Kelso, where his private coach, containing a quantity of sumptuous clothes and three hundred pounds in money, fell into the hands of General Leslie. Occurrences of this kind in no wise oppressed his spirits, and he continued his career of laughing philosopher until complications obliged him to fly to the Continent. He seems to have died in Paris in 1642, after being greatly reduced in fortune. As he was unmarried, the patrimony passed to his father's half-brother, Charles Suckling. Such is a rough outline of the figure he cut as a man.

In poetry he had the great merit of not taking himself too seriously. Suckling was not one of those poets who look upon the composition of verses as the greatest object that can be achieved. To him it was rather a pretty accomplishment that every gentleman ought to possess. Comparatively few of his pieces were published during his lifetime, and the best of them are those where he is at his simplest and easiest. The famous "Why so pale and wan, fond lover?" was probably a very sincere statement of his own sentiments. His loves were many, and he did not regard passion with any more seriousness than he regarded poetry. This would be apparent from his verse and prose works, even if there had not been any contemporary evidence.

His simple and natural manner of treating such subjects is curiously exemplified in one of his letters, which almost certainly was written to his sister Martha, the occasion being the suicide of her husband, Sir George Southcote, who had previously deserted her. Surely a widow has seldom been consoled by a brother in terms like the following:

I thank Heaven that we live in an age when the widows wear colours, and in a country where the women that lose their husbands may be trusted with poisons, knives, and all the burning coals in Europe, notwithstanding the precedent of Sophonisba and Portia. Considering the estate you are in now, I should reasonably imagine that meaner physicians than Seneca or Cicero might administer comfort. It is so far from me to imagine this accident should surprise you, that in my opinion it should not make you wonder, it being not strange at all that a man who hath lived all his time so ill in a house, should break a window or steal away in the night through an unusual postern. You are now free; and what matter is it to a prisoner whether the fetters be taken off the ordinary way or not? If, instead of putting off handsomely the chain of matrimony, he hath rudely broken it, 'tis at his own charge, nor should it cost you a tear. Nothing (Madam) has worse mien than counterfeit sorrow; and you must have the height of woman's art to make yours appear other, especially when the spectators shall consider all the story.

He goes on to tell her of the Spanish Princess Leonina who, "hearing a post was sent to tell her her husband was dead, and knowing the secretary was on the way for that purpose, sent to stay the post till the arrival of the secretary, that she might not be obliged to shed tears twice."

His prose writing nearly all has this simple and direct style. The letters are varied with the quotations and anecdotes of a well-read humorist. In the course of a letter to a lady unnamed, for example, he quotes the following epitaph as one that "would better have become my gravestone than any other my friends the poets would have found out for me":

EPITAPH.
Here lies Don Alonso
Slain by a wound received under
His left Pap,
The Orifice of which was so
Small, no Chirurgeon could
Discover it,
Reader
If thou wouldst avoid so strange
A Death,
Look not upon Lucinda's eyes.

He took his plays much more seriously than he did his poems; but they have value now chiefly on account of the scraps of excellent verse they contain. But of his poems there are not more than a dozen that deserve to be remembered. To read poems, plays and prose works together is to obtain a vivid idea of the manner of life of the typical cavalier of those days. Sir John Suckling could not have been a Puritan either in temper, disposition or conduct.

NOTES FROM A DERBYSHIRE COUNTRY HOUSE. Varieties of Many Years, edited by Emily Mundy. (Bemrose and Sons.)

THIS is a book entirely of its own kind. Mrs. Mundy has kept a notebook in which she set down the miscellaneous items of information that amused her, and they are thrown together here in a wild disorder, which is more instructive in its way than the most logical

essay would have been. We jump from John o' Gaunt to the parish register and extracts from wills, all of which, by the by, are very well chosen. A few pages further on are set down extracts from the wages-book at Markeaton from 1795 to 1800. The wages were paid once a year, and nearly always for fifty weeks. The authoress supposes that the servants had a fortnight's holiday, and were not paid during that time. From the extracts it would appear that a cook received ten shillings and sixpence a week, a gardener twenty-one pounds a year, a maid eight guineas a year, a housemaid six pounds and a groom nine pounds. Markeaton in recent times has been celebrated for its Shire horses. Apparently in the last century it was celebrated for its cattle and sheep. There is a catalogue of a sale in 1888 which cattle-breeders will find extremely interesting. The prices obtained would not be considered very high in these times, but they were so then. They ranged from twenty pounds to forty-one pounds for a dairy cow, and from twelve pounds to twenty-five pounds for a heifer. The bulls did not command high prices. Gardeners will find the bill from the nursery and seedsman dated 1823 instructive. At that time it seems hollies, two feet high, could be purchased at the rate of one pound for two hundred. Twenty-five string yews, two and a-half feet high, cost seven shillings and sixpence. Peaches, apricots and nectarines cost about fifteen pence each. These are just a few items from a volume that is crammed full of miscellaneous information of the most diverse kinds. Mrs. Mundy closes her book in a manner to leave no doubt as to her political opinions, at any rate, as she has enshrined among her odds and ends Sir Edward Carson's reply to Mr. Lloyd-George, and a long passage from Lord Rosebery's speech on the Budget, which she aptly calls "From the Cradle to the Grave."

"LOVE'S NOT TIME'S FOOL—"

First Love, by Marie van Vorst. (Mills and Boon.)

"LIKE this the first woman came to him, and it was nothing but the old story over again, interesting because it was first love—because it was real." The love of a boy of twenty-four for a woman of nearly forty is not a new theme, nor is the novel in which their story is told more than "the old story over again"; but Marie van Vorst has made both theme and story interesting and convincing for the reason indicated in the above sentence, taken from one of her chapters—"because they are real." A woman possessed of both beauty and character is drawn in the American, Virginia Bathurst; while from the moment in which John Bennett appears as a little boy at the auction of his dead father's effects, "in his knickerbockers and his little plain clothes, hands in his pockets, his brow puckered and his feet planted firmly on the floor," to face the "biggest tragedy of his life," he is attractive. The story is throughout lightly told. Virginia never loses her head or lets go of her sense of humour; and neither does her creator. But the tragedy that it is no use even weeping over is none the less nearest in likeness to the tragedies of life. The author succeeds in a difficult business. She brings the mind, as the figures of Virginia and John grow before it, to that assent which is the triumph of a writer, especially in a dangerous and difficult situation. She makes the reader feel the attributes for which each fell in love with the other and acknowledged that they undoubtedly would have done so in spite of their difference in age. All the people in the story are alive, even those that are no more than indicated. Bathurst, the impossible husband, Cynthia, the pretty young girl, Nicholas Pyrrne, Virginia's unswerving cynical adorer, are all, without being anything wonderful in the way of "character studies," "interesting because they are real." The truthful finish is the best bit of the book. There is one kind of love, perhaps the only one which really deserves the word, which comes from the fitting in of two natures as a key fits in a lock. That kind never in real life really suffers dethronement, and therefore never comes twice; neither does any external difference rob it of success. We leave them—Virginia, middle-aged and married to her old lover, but exquisite and individual still—John, a contented father and husband, but as red-headed, definite and determined as ever; and we are allowed the truth that they could have been happy together as nobody else will make them happy, because when it is of that kind, "Love's not time's fool."

ANOTHER TALE FROM THE FIVE TOWNS.

Helen with the High Hand, by Arnold Bennett. (Chapman and Hall.)

THE dreadful enlightenment of Mr. James Ollerenshaw as to the real meaning of possessing a great-stepiece even when she can cook kidney omelettes in a manner never before equalled in the Five Towns, makes an engaging and amusing story. Its line is best indicated by the fact that when we first meet Mr. Ollerenshaw, at the point when he is himself first meeting his great-stepiece upon a seat in the park, his establishment is near the top of Trafalgar Road, costs him eighteen pounds a year, and is ruled by the fat old charwoman, Mrs. Butt; but when we leave Mr. Ollerenshaw at the end of the book he is dwelling in Wilbraham Hall with forty-five separate apartments, not including linen closets, a grand piano and a German butler with beautiful eyes, to say nothing of Georgiana. He is also the husband of Mrs. Prockter, which last fact causes us considerable pleasure. Since it was inevitable that Mr. Ollerenshaw should fall into the hands of a woman, better the plump, kind hands of the humorous Mrs. Prockter than the high hand of Helen. It is, indeed, almost dreadful to see the way Helen, who really was an undoubted minx, wins every trick against the helpless, amazed, and yet still sturdy Mr. Ollerenshaw, for while it was, of course, very wrong of Mr. Ollerenshaw to be a miser, he was for all that what the triumphant Helen called "a perfect old darling"; and we feel as aggravated as he does when she annexes his noble birthday gift of twenty-six pounds, not given without a night of anxious thought, as calmly as though he had given her a sixpence. It is a comfort to reflect that when she married Andrew Dean she undoubtedly fell under an even higher hand than her own. Mr. Dean, who charged the inoffensive Emanuel and his yellow chamois gloves into Wilbraham Water for no apparent reason except that he was inoffensive, must have been a match even for Helen Rathbone. The infinite and laborious pains with which Mr. James Ollerenshaw goes to work to outwit his step-niece and yet keep her with him, and the dire ease with which his step-niece

continues to outwit him; his astonishment at her love affairs and his still greater astonishment at his own; the ludicrous situations which arise from the industrious pursuit of their own ends by everyone in the book, beginning with the high-handed Helen and going on with the amused Mrs. Prockter and interspersed by the stern but entirely futile efforts of Mr. James himself, make a story through the perusal of which one smiles without ceasing except when one is stopping to laugh.

GIPSY BLOOD.

The Wild Heart, by M. E. Francis. (Smith, Elder and Co.)

MRS. BLUNDELL'S hand loses none of its cunning as time goes on. Her new book, *The Wild Heart*, deals with stronger and stranger themes than those that usually attract her, and she engages with them in the same sure way and with the same sincerity and success. Neither the word too much nor the word too little, if one may use an Irishism, is to be found in Mrs. Blundell's books. The story goes to its end with no exaggeration, but also with no salient point unshown; and character works to its inevitable end. The "wild heart" belongs to a man with gipsy blood in him, who has, before the story opens, killed a keeper in self-defence, and, indeed, without meaning to do so. He breaks out of prison and escapes from England with the help of the Dorset maiden, Tasmine, to whose old uncle's farm, when she is alone there, he comes for clothes and food. Three years later he returns, drawn by his love and longing for her. The risk of detection is great; but risk is the breath of David's nostrils, and with Tasmine in the other scale he barely so much as weighs it. They marry, but their time of happiness is short.

In a tragic way that is yet neither forced nor unnatural, it is Martha, the wife of the murdered keeper, who at last tracks David down, and, in a fit of virtual insanity, robs the law of its prey by killing him herself. Careless, irresponsible and charming—with that "sense of the wild," that gay abhorrence of convention and love of danger which mark in every rank of life the more interesting nature from its respectable fellows—Mrs. Blundell has seldom drawn a type better than she does in David; and the contrast between him and the Dorset girl he worships, the adorable, truthful Tasmine, every fibre of her trained to law and order, as a plant is trained against a wall, is very good. Tragedy was inevitable, and came better from the mad hand of poor Martha in one moment's jealous fury than it would have done in the slow drifting apart of husband and wife. Those were the only alternatives for the wild heart of David. All the sweetness of the Dorset country and the Dorset woo is that David loved, and all the charm of the Dorset folk and their attractive dialect, are in the setting of this sorrowful human story. They are in many of Mrs. Blundell's stories; and it is no small compliment to Mrs. Blundell's skill that one never wearies of them, but welcomes them again and yet again.

THREE LOVE-STORIES.

Betty Carew, by Katharine Tynan. (Smith, Elder and Co.)

The Woman Who Forgot, by Lady Troubridge. (Mills and Boon.)

Tinsel and Gold, by Dion Clayton Calthrop. (Alston Rivers.)

MISS KATHARINE TYNAN'S tales may not greatly stir the imagination, but neither do they strain the nerves, and that is no small matter in these strenuous days. Betty Carew's love-story goes its happy way, with small jokes and some tears, and the slight misunderstanding or two that is necessary to make a story; and Dollie Lindsay's love-story goes by a somewhat stormier way, through a temporary infatuation for the villain of the book and an heroic rescue of her enemy's son from a mad dog; and both bring up at the "happy ever after" ending which, it is so satisfactory to think, does happen sometimes, if only in novels. *The Woman Who Forgot*, by Lady Troubridge, offers no such pleasant, well-trodden path. The strange situation brought about by the total loss of memory occasioned in a young married woman by a terrible railway accident is pushed to its relentless close.

The girl, helpless, penniless and dazed, eventually marries the man with whom she had begun a friendship in the train, and who rescues and cares for her after the accident, he himself being unhurt. They fall overwhelmingly in love with each other, and all clue to her identity being gone and all memory of a former life vanished, marriage seems the only solution. As was inevitable, however, the old life begins to close round Deirdre as soon as she and her husband settle in London, and when it is finally established who she is, the situation is seen to be impossible. Everyone concerned struggles to do the right thing, through a tempest of emotion and love-making and horror combined; but it is inevitable for the purposes of the story that one man should die, and so one man does. The husband, from whom, in a temporary estrangement, Deirdre had been travelling at the time of the accident, cannot stand his position, which is not to be wondered at, seeing that Deirdre's return of memory makes no alteration in her adoration of the man she has married, while her unfortunate husband loves her still. So he shoots himself, and the thing is ended. The story is well told—with skill and delicacy; but though one finds it impossible to lay down the book till one has seen how the author is going to get her very attractive characters out of the terrible *cul de sac* into which she brings them, the fact remains that such a theme is perhaps fitter for a medical treatise than for a novel.

The last of these love-stories, *Tinsel and Gold*, by Dion Clayton Calthrop, is the best of the three. It is robust and vigorous, full of incident and with some good scenes. It also contests, sometimes with vehemence, that rank and all its appurtenances, especially those differences said to exist between the gentle and the lowly born, are sham and falsity—"tinsel," in short. Lily Lorette, modest, courageous and irresistible, is real life and love. She is also a music-hall singer who began life in a fried-fish shop. Lord Ascalon, a nobleman of artistic and refined tastes, marries her in a fit of boyish passion, but afterwards bitterly regrets his action. Though always doing his duty by her, he keeps the marriage secret, and Lily faithfully accepts the situation and goes on singing. But she is the real

"gold" and he the coward, afraid of his world (which is painted as consisting largely of empty women and stupid men), and in the end, turning herself into a "lady" by the sheer goodness and greatness of her heart and her love for her husband, she conquers him. The book would, perhaps, be stronger if it did not always insist that Lord Ascalon's work for his tenants, etc., is "playing at life" and "tinsel," while Lily's actions are pure "gold." The story is a very good one, its host of characters (with the exception of the "gentlefolk") are exceedingly interesting and well drawn. The finale, with Lord and Lady Ascalon arriving in state and happiness at Ascalon House, is in no way marred by any lack of appreciation of the value of "tinsel."

BOOKS TO ORDER FROM THE LIBRARY.

Sterne: A Study, by Walter Sichel. (Williams and Norgate.)
Through the French Provinces, by Ernest Peixotto. (Werner Laurie.)
The Life and Times of Mrs. Sherwood (1775—1851), edited by F. J. Harvey Darton. (Wells, Gardner, Darton and Co.)
Sketches and Snapshots, by the Right Hon. G. W. E. Russell. (Smith, Elder.)
The Bolster Book, by Harry Graham. (Mills and Boon.)
Petticoat Government, by the Baroness Orczy. (Hutchinson.)
The Spirit of America, by Henry Van Dyke. (Macmillan.)
Tales of Bengal, by S. B. Banerjee. (Longman's.)
At all Hazards, by Frances Heath Freshfield. (Allen.)

ON THE GREEN.

EDITED BY HORACE HUTCHINSON.

"BOGEY."

A WRITER, discussing the playing of the Parliamentary competition under "Bogey" conditions, points out that on one occasion when the "Bogey" plan was resorted to in order to weed out and reduce to a reasonable number those who should take part in the ultimate tournament, all calculations based on the ordinary conditions of the course were upset by a heavy gale of wind. He specially instances the case of the late Mr. John Penn, a scratch player, who was but one down to "Bogey" at the turn, yet lost every single hole in the home-coming against the wind. This was on the St. George's course at Sandwich. Of course, this is a weakness of the "Bogey" method, that it takes no account of weather conditions. "Bogey" is above all human weaknesses and is affected by no gale. Something might be done, as the writer suggests, by special laying out of the course or by modification of the "Bogey" score on the morning of the day of competition; but that would only be but a step in the right direction, for we have often found the character of a day to vary very much within the eight hours of the golfer's working time, and the wisest arrangements made at 9 a.m. might by noon be reduced to folly by the machinations of the Clerk of the Weather.

MANY CONSECUTIVE HOLES AGAINST THE WIND.

Apart from that question, the fact that it can be possible for a good player to lose all the home-coming holes to a Bogey score suggests a larger question again—whether it is a good plan or a bad one to have a course so disposed that all the outgoing holes, speaking in a rough and general way, are towards one point of the compass and all the home-coming ones the opposite. On the St. George's course this is not nearly as marked a disposition as on some other greens, say, St. Andrews, North Berwick, Hoylake, so that one does not quite understand the nine consecutive lost holes. Probably the explanation is that the player was so battered by a few holes of beating against the wind that he lost his form and could not do himself justice when the conditions did give him a chance. But in spite of all the veneration in which it is only right that such a course as St. Andrews should be held, it probably makes for more pleasant golf if a course twists this way and that, so that the play may be now with and now against the wind, rather than that there should be that long beat of seven consecutively of the longest holes of the course against the wind which we have to endure when the gale is opposed

to the home-coming at St. Andrews. In part it is this which makes St. Andrews such a testing course; but we do not always want such shrewd testing, and if we could only have a couple of holes down wind, or with the wind on a side, interpolated into the middle of the windward beating, they would make a very pleasant rest and variety.

REASON WHY CLASSIC COURSES ARE SO LAID OUT.

The reason why we find many of the older courses laid out in this straight-away fashion—more or less straight out and back again—is, no doubt, that they have grown to their present stature of eighteen holes from small beginnings in which the mode was for the few players of the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries to use the same greens and holes going out and coming in, driving into each other's faces all the while in a way that would make the modern golfer pallid with terror. This was the manner of the growth of many of the classic greens. The clearance of the strip between the whins which then pervaded the links was a heavy burden for the few members of the golfing societies of the time, and they did not wish to add to the burden by clearing two strips if

one would do. The modern maker of a course has a full purse and a slate that he can make clean to work with, his set number of holes and greens is eighteen, and he will be wise to plan them out so as to give variety, so far as may be, in the angle at which the breeze will catch the player all through the piece.

COURSES RECOVERING FROM THE RAINS.

It is perfectly marvellous how courses which were water-logged, and even lying under standing water, only a fortnight or so ago have recovered under the recent conditions of better weather. It looked, at that time, as if there was hardly a chance, in the case of many of them, of finding them in anything like playable condition for the Easter meetings. Of course, in the glorious uncertainty of our climate we do not know what changes may be in store for us between the date of our writing this and its reading; but it certainly does look as if they ought to be in excellent order, in spite of Easter coming so early. They hardly seem, in fact, to have suffered in the least by their flooding, and it is possible that in some cases they may have been actually benefited by the wetting and by the rest which their flooded state has obliged the golfer to accord them.

UNIVERSITY RECIPROCITIES.

Universities and University societies are going to be very busy playing each other this spring and summer. There is the match between the Oxford and Cambridge Society and the Scottish Universities Society after Easter;



THE HON. EVAN CHARTERIS.

that is one. Then there is to be a game between Dublin and Cambridge at Dollymount, whither Cambridge will go when they have disposed of Oxford at Hoylake. Dublin University have one very fine player indeed in Mr. Lionel Munn, and they have also Mr. Patterson, who has been close champion of Ireland, and who, if not a beautiful player, is an extremely effective one. What manner of players the other six may be we do not know, but at least the first two Cambridge men will have their work cut out. The invaders are also to play a team of the Dublin University Golfing Society, wherein Messrs. Munn and Patterson will be reinforced by most of the Irish Bar team. Finally, we in England are, in our turn, to be invaded in the summer by a Scottish University Society side. Among other matches they will play at Walton Heath and Stoke Poges. A golfing tour to London has rather a curious sound in Southern ears; but, after all, some of the London courses are quite good enough to justify it. The worst of it is that if the summer is very fine and hot, there may be so much run in the hard ground that our visitors from the North may not quite appreciate how long and difficult some of our London courses are. There is a wonderful difference in the sand and heather courses in winter and summer, and at Woking, for instance, the holes which need two full shots in winter come under the head of the proverbial "kick and a spit" in summer.

GANTON REVISITED.

The Ganton course, where the ladies were playing their territorial tournament last week, has undergone a good many changes since it first became famous as the home green of Harry Vardon. The holes have been altered and lengthened, whins have disappeared in places, and in one particular place a famous belt of trees has been ruthlessly cut away. This is at the twelfth, which was formerly celebrated because one had to hit very hard and very high with a mashie in order that the ball might clear the trees and plump down dead upon the other side. However, these holes which are the pride of one generation are the shame of the next; so the trees have had to go and the hole has become a very good but comparatively ordinary one-shot hole. The general characteristics of the course remain unaltered. There is still the most delicious turf, wonderfully soft for the feet and inspiring for the iron shot. There are likewise plenty of rough grass and whins and sand—all good things. In fact, Ganton is very like Sunningdale or Walton Heath or Woking, and can now hold up its head in the very best company among inland courses.

A GLORIOUS BUNKER.

There is one especial feature at Ganton, and that is by far the largest and generally most magnificent sand bunker to be found anywhere inland. Up till the seventeenth hole the bunkers have been comparatively ordinary and mostly of the pot variety. Suddenly, when we arrive on the seventeenth tee, this gigantic pit comes in sight and we gasp at it in amazement. In general shape and outline it is exactly like the seaside bunker, and is almost worthy of comparison with that in front of the fifth tee at Westward Ho! It is so big that, by means of its various sandy tentacles that stretch out in different directions, it can play a most effective part at both of the last two holes. As the sixteenth hole is a particularly fine one, the course ends in a regular blaze of glory, and the last three holes are the most attractive part of the course. All the course is good, however, and has one great merit from a stranger's point of view—that we see exactly where we are going. In a course blessed plentifully with whins, the older architects could never resist the temptation of giving us a series of blind pitches to play over a sea of whins. This temptation has been most sternly resisted at Ganton, and there is hardly a shot when we cannot see the twist and turn of the ball till it rests, let us hope, a yard from the flag.

THE HON. EVAN CHARTERIS.

Few golfers hit the ball so gently and easily as Mr. Evan Charteris, and a great many would, no doubt, play much better if they did. Although Mr. Charteris appears to exert himself so wonderfully little, he yet drives a very sufficient distance; he is, moreover, uncommonly straight and a skilful wielder of the wooden putter. All last year he was playing exceedingly well, and among his achievements was that of tying for a North Berwick medal with Captain Hutchison with a particularly excellent score. His London golf he plays chiefly at Sunningdale and Stoke Poges, and he also is one of the chief ornaments of the Bar team that plays annually against the Stock Exchange. It was in 1908 that the result of the whole match depended on Mr. Charteris. He had been five up at lunch-time; but the whole of these five had disappeared when the turn was reached in the second round. It was an agonising moment, but Mr. Charteris remained undismayed and duly won at the seventeenth hole; whereat the Bar rejoiced, for they very much enjoy beating the Stock Exchange.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SHIPTON HALL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As regards your article on Shipton Hall in last week's issue of COUNTRY LIFE, I may inform you that the actual place where Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, was discovered and arrested is known, having been by tradition, handed down from time immemorial, identified as an area of woodland which fifty years ago was, and no doubt now is, known by the name of Banister's Coppice. It is situated under Wenlock Edge, at the Wenlock end thereof, and about a mile and a-half or two miles from Wenlock, eleven from Shrewsbury and six or seven miles as the crow flies from Shipton Hall, and in the parish of Shineton. I as a boy knew the place well, as it adjoins the estate of Buildwas Park, then owned by my cousin and now by his nephew, and I can testify to the undoubted belief of the neighbourhood that it was in that wood that the Duke was found and, with the complicity of Banister, its then owner, arrested. The locality must, indeed, have been a savagely wooded district in the fourteenth century, and much woodland still exists in the parish of Shineton and the adjoining parishes of Wenlock and Buildwas; and the names of farms and other places ending in "wood" testify to its ancient condition. I trust that this information may be of interest to your readers who do not know this beautiful part of Shropshire.—F. P. O.

THE TRUE OXSLIP.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Very fine oxslips grow in East Suffolk; they will be found in the ditches of the fields on the boulder clay. I have seen two kinds, one the colour of a primrose, another a rich orange colour. I have found them at Aspall and at Thornham and at Debenham, where I was for twenty-three years vicar. A very curious thing about them I noticed once. Some plants were sent me from Thornham and I planted them in the garden of Childrey Rectory, to which I was appointed by my college in 1882. In a couple of years the change of soil ("blackland," on the blue gault) affected them, and the flowers became almost white.—C. J. CORNISH.

"SOMETHING IN IT."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read with interest Mr. Eldred Walker's letter containing an account of how a West Country farmer protected his potato crop from disease by soaking the potato sets before planting in a solution of sulphate of copper. Mr. Walker suggests that the sulphate of copper, in the case in question, probably killed the disease spores, which otherwise would have gone into the soil in an active state, and he expresses surprise that the dressing of the potato sets before planting has not been more freely recommended. I do not doubt that the plan followed by the old farmer in question was effectual in preventing the spread of the particular form of disease by which his potatoes were liable to be attacked. But I very much doubt whether the trouble was due to *Phytophthora infestans*, the name by which potato disease is known. The sulphate of copper could not have any effect on the inside of the sets, and any spores killed by the solution must have been resting on the outside of the potato skin. But I am not aware that *Phytophthora infestans* is carried over from one season to another in that way to any material extent. That it is carried over by diseased tubers there is probably little reason to doubt; but the organism of the disease in such cases is contained within the tuber, as a rule, and is, therefore, beyond the reach of any

treatment applied externally to the potato. This disease may be continued from one year to another in several ways, but in none of them is it at all probable that the soaking of the original sets in copper sulphate would have any protective effect on the succeeding crop. There are many diseases of the potato, as Mr. Walker, of course, knows, and the probability is that one of these, other than *Phytophthora infestans*, was the destructive agent in the case in question. It may have been one of the forms of scab. The soaking of the sets before planting is not a new idea. In the Board of Agriculture Journal for March, 1905, immersion for two hours in a solution of one pint of commercial formalin to thirty-six gallons of water is recommended for that species of scab known as *Oospora scabies*. In 1908 Mr. Stewart of the Leeds University found this treatment wonderfully satisfactory, his report being that there was little scab present on the produce where the parent sets had been submerged in formalin. I may add that the Garforth authorities have experimented with sets dusted with quicklime, but I am not aware of any tests having been carried out anywhere with copper sulphate. I do not, however, see how treatment of the kind can be successful for dealing with *Phytophthora infestans*, although it might be useful for, say, scab as a substitute for formalin.—J. C.

INDIGENOUS v. EXOTIC SPECIES OF FISH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was much interested in Mr. Herbert Trevelyan's letter re Irish pollan or "fresh-water herring" in your issue of February 5th. However, before commenting on this letter, I wish to emphasise the fact that I wrote my paper, published in the previous number, to which Mr. Trevelyan was replying, as a protest against the happy-go-lucky method of fish cultivation being practised throughout the civilised and scientific (?) world to-day. England, being small—or, rather, the United Kingdom—and well populated with the moneyed leisured class, suffers perhaps more than any other country from the misguided ideas of influential people. Mr. Charles Atkins, making the report of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the American Fisheries Society at their meeting in 1906, said: "The conditions in English waters appear to be exceedingly favourable to the growth of fish, and most species reach a larger size than the corresponding species in America." Why are the British Isles not satisfied with their own? Why send to America for the much-to-be-dreaded black bass? If the black bass is introduced he will be "dumped" pell-mell into water containing some valuable native fish or fishes. Who ever heard of a farmer growing oats, barley and turnips mixed together in the same field? This sort of thing will not do in pisciculture any more than in agriculture. Lakes, rivers and streams should, as much as possible, be reserved for the native species that suits each the best. One should see to the commercial side of things, and that there is no mixing, artificially or naturally. Working on this theory, every kind of fish worth considering would receive its proper place in which to thrive and breed unmolested. Then even a better class of fish could be expected. There is no particular reason why a portion of Ireland, Wales or the English Lake District should not produce a better class of whitefish than the great lakes of the North American Continent. A little legislation may be required, but that should not be any hindrance. It would give employment to a large number of people and provide Ireland with another home industry. It is pleasant to learn from Mr. Trevelyan's letter that "apparently the merits of the fish as a food are being discovered." Perhaps Mr. Trevelyan, or someone else, can tell us if this fish is holding its own; if anything is being done to propagate it artificially, and what other fish inhabit the same waters in

Ireland. I am sure that any such information will be most interesting and welcome to the readers of COUNTRY LIFE.—GEORGE P. BOSANQUET, Inglewood, Ontario.

AN INVASION BY BLACK-BEETLES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There is nothing like Keating's insect powder to destroy young black-beetles; it also helps with the old ones. Shake a little close to the holes they come from, but do not use it more than three nights running; then discontinue for a week and use again. The dead should be swept up in the morning and burnt.—A. E. COOKE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—If your correspondent "H. P." will place in the room invaded by black-beetles a thin slice of bread and butter sprinkled with Keating's powder, he will quickly exterminate the pest.—L. T. FORD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—With reference to your request for further information re extermination of black-beetles, I write to say that we were for many years infested with them. Traps did little good, though they kept them down a little. We were advised to try borax freely put down in places where they came, and did so. Since then I have seen none, and the servants say they have hardly seen one. It seems simply to be disliked by them and to drive them away, where to I do not know, but it drives them away rather than destroys them. It is only fair to say that last summer being a cold one, they would not appear so largely as usual, but I do not attribute their non-appearance to that, but to the borax.—G. BRUCE GOSLING.

[Lady McIlwraith and many other correspondents have also recommended borax for this purpose.—ED.]

WINTER EGGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Seeing your correspondent's letter in your issue of COUNTRY LIFE for March 12th re winter eggs, I thought it might interest you to know the result I have obtained from my pen of fifteen White Wyandotte pullets. They were hatched in March, 1909, and from October 1st, 1909, to March 1st, 1910, they laid eight hundred and forty eggs.—FRANCES MERRETT.

SAVING AN HISTORIC WATERWAY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The news that the Lee Conservancy has recently acquired the navigation rights of the river Stort is a matter of interest not only to those accustomed to use this old waterway, opened so long ago as 1769, but also to anglers and antiquaries. Ever since April last the river Stort, which extends from Bishops Stortford to its junction with the Lea, in the meadows just above Hoddesdon, has been practically closed owing to the collapse of the Brick Lock, Roydon. As a result of negotiations the Lee Conservancy has now taken over entire control of this ancient waterway, and its locks and the bridges will be repaired. One of the most beautiful and historical points near the river Stort, situated almost at the confluence of the two rivers, is the site of the famous Rye House. Here, beside the Lea, are the remains of the building in which was hatched the plot against Charles II. and his brother James. The renaissance of the old waterway reminds us of this romantic conspiracy. The Rye House stands on the left bank of the Lea, and was formerly a moated castle, built in the reign of Henry VI. by Andrew Ogard. In the spring of 1682 the building, then much decayed, belonged to Richard Rumbold, a maltster and an old Parliamentarian soldier. He had joined a political association composed of men disaffected with the arbitrary government of Charles II. These men, most of whom were ultra-Republicans, proposed to assassinate the King and his brother as they passed the lonely house on their return from Newmarket Races in March, 1683. Rumbold agreed to secrete fifty of the conspirators and their horses at the Rye House,

and when the King's coach came by they were to sally out, shoot the postillions and then fire into the coach. The plot, however, failed; a fire broke out in the Royal lodgings at Newmarket. The King returned suddenly to London and passed the ambush a week before the assassins expected him. A short distance away from the Rye House, on the other side of the river Stort, are the romantic ruins of Nether Hall, an early Tudor structure. The Rye Fishery, which is so well known to anglers, extends about five miles, and is a favourite resort of the disciples of Izaak Walton, whose name is inseparably connected with the neighbourhood. It is a matter for congratulation that this important waterway is to be restored to its former usefulness.—GEORGE H. SWEET.



NETHER HALL.

COLOURED BLACKBIRDS IN BATTERSEA PARK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There are two abnormally coloured blackbirds in Battersea Park. One appears to be entirely white, except for the outer primaries, which are black. The other has a white head and body, with black wings and tail, and some black markings on the neck. These birds are both very shy. Each of them seems to confine itself to its own particular shrubbery in different parts of the park, from which, apparently, it seldom ventures far away.—J. R. H.

A QUAIN CUSTOM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Referring to the enquiry in your issue of the 19th inst. about hanging up in churches garlands which had been carried at the funerals of virgins, your correspondent will find in the "Book of Days," under February 18th, a long account of this custom, which was formerly very common. There, too, are illustrations of several garlands which hung in Ashford-in-the-Waters Church, two miles from Bakewell. Some were there less than twenty years ago, and are probably there still. In "Hamlet," Act V., Scene I., we read: "Yet here she is allowed her virgin 'crants'"—crants signifying garlands. Further information from the pen of the late Llewellyn Jewitt, F.S.A., may be found in the "Reliquary," Vol. I., pages 5 to 11.—MABY A. GIBSON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—With reference to your enquiry in COUNTRY LIFE of March 19th as to "A Quain Custom," may I say that in the church of Abbots-Ann, two and a-half miles south-west of Andover and thirteen miles north-west from Winchester, a number of wreaths are hung on the walls. These wreaths have a white (paper) glove attached, and were carried in front of the deceased virgin's coffin, any detractor of the virgin's character being thereby challenged to pluck the glove. Abbots-Ann formerly belonged to Hyde Abbey, Winchester, King Alfred's burial-place.—W. M. H.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reply to your correspondent Mr. W. R. Bullen in the issue of your always interesting journal of March 19th, among other churches in which virgins' funeral wreaths are to be found is the parish church of the pretty village of Minsterley, Shropshire.—M. S. A.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reply to the enquiry of Mr. W. R. Bullen in last week's COUNTRY LIFE as to wreaths in churches to deceased virgins, I know of one in Walsham-le-Willows Church in Suffolk. Bourne, in his "Antiquitates Vulgares," says: "In some country churches 'tis customary to hang a garland of flowers over the seats of deceased virgins, as a token of esteem and love, and an emblem of their reward in the heavenly church." In the Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology for 1899 there is an account of the one I have mentioned. The author also says: "There are 'garlands' I believe in Dorsetshire and Hampshire churches, and in 'Hamlet,' Act V., Scene I., 'She shall have her virgin crants'; the 'crant' being obviously connected with the German word Kranz."—W. J. LANGDON, Mayor of Sudbury.



THE RYE HOUSE.

WOMEN AS RAILWAY OFFICIALS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—While travelling through Brittany I was interested to note the number of women employed on the railways. At nearly all the wayside stations they act as booking-clerks, and in many cases have control of the station as



THE STATION-MISTRESS.

Great Britain. He was one of the originators of the Dutch system of butter control, which, by means of an elaborate system of analysis, is enabled to detect adulteration in a sample from any of the provinces of Holland. He wrote practically the only work that has been published on Glucosides. For some years past he has filled the post of Agricultural Commissioner to Friesland.—W.

TROUBLE WITH THE HORSES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The recent two or three days of fine weather caused farmers to put an unusual strain on their horses in order to make up the prolonged winter's leeway. But at the close of the day it was very evident from the fatigued and distressed look of the horses that they had gone soft and out of condition with the enforced winter's rest; and that many of them will prove quite incapable of withstanding the sudden call and stress put upon them admits of no doubt. If a horse becomes overheated and sweaty, it does not take many minutes' standing on a headland or beside a hedge to lay the foundation of a very severe chill; therefore, the master's eye must be particularly directed to his horses. If after the carter has left he goes to the stable and finds that one of the horses is not feeding, a tonic will soon help matters, whereas if the horse is allowed to remain all night and sent out to work with an empty stomach next morning it will be a case for the vet., as soon as possible. Another source of

the trouble will be the in-foal mares. Most farmers who have these like to get their spring work well forward during the winter, but this year this has been quite impossible. And now the mares will have to be put to work totally unsuited for them. The worst of all is that of manure carting. Here, with a two-wheel cart, there is a tendency for the shafts to impart very serious blows to the sides of the mare, and if these should tap the unborn foal's head it is a dead one to a certainty. It is an advantage to give mares light work in chains, such as harrowing or bushing, and they can be set ploughing unless the work is very heavy.—

ELDRÉD WALKER.



CAPITAL WORKERS.

MR. OLIVER G. PIKE ON THE BUZZARD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was much interested in the above, as Mr. Pike's observations on the peculiarity of the firstborn buzzard destroying the younger ones explain to me what has been a great mystery till I read the article in last week's COUNTRY LIFE. My observations on this bird have been almost entirely confined to Cornwall, where it is still fairly numerous. I know of two pairs that build in trees, and I have frequently climbed up to one of these for years past. It is situated about four miles from Walebridge, my native town, where I spend many week-ends. Every year I have noticed that one bird is hatched several days before the second, and the second two or three days before the third. When I have climbed—say, within a week—the three might still be alive; but if longer, there would be only two or even one. This puzzled and also disappointed me much. I could not understand why there should be only one left as a general rule. I have frequently noticed that only one young bird is eventually reared. I have on more than one occasion mentioned this to other people, but nobody could ever give me an explanation. The buzzard manages to keep up in numbers in Cornwall fairly well. I know of several woods they regularly build in, though, of course, they are most numerous on the coast. They are not persecuted nearly as badly as the rare peregrine. I actually saw a gamekeeper shoot at a falcon near Padstow last summer. Their eggs are also much sought after. No protection is afforded to either of the birds by the Cornwall County Council. Cannot this be brought to the notice of the Council?—H. P. O. CLEAVE.

THE REAPPEARANCE OF A MAIMED BIRD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

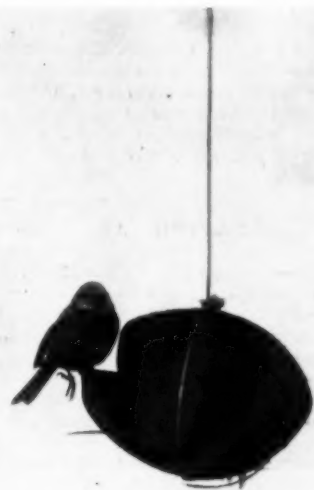
SIR,—It is not often that Nature puts distinguishing marks upon individual birds, but sometimes accidents achieve this end. The blue tit in the enclosed little picture has for two years in succession come to claim its share of alms from my hanging nuts. It is recognisable with certainty owing to the right foot hanging down stiffly, useless when perching and trailing in flight. I think the joint at the "heel" has been badly broken, or the whole leg may be paralysed, as the bird never makes the slightest attempt to use it, not even when lighting.—BENTLEY BERTHAM.

A JERBOA'S FOOD.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—May I invoke the advice of readers of COUNTRY LIFE as to the best and most nourishing foods for a jerboa?—H. J. ST. BENNO CUNLIFFE.

[The jerboa, or "kangaroo rat," as it is sometimes called, is not a difficult animal to keep in captivity. Its food should consist principally of oats, with other grain occasionally for a change. It should also have fresh greenstuff, such as water-cress, lettuce, etc., at frequent intervals. In its natural state it is partially insectivorous. Being a nocturnal animal, it will always be livelier in the evening than in the daytime, and will most appreciate fresh food at that time. It should have plenty of room for exercise and free access to an absolutely dark sleeping apartment. The floor



A REGULAR VISITOR.

of its cage should have a thick covering of sand, and it should be given a heap of dry earth, in which it will enjoy burrowing. The earth also assists it to clean itself. The best food will be wasted on it unless proper attention is paid to these details.—ED. J.

WORKING

TERRIERS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The enclosed photograph shows two working terriers—a West Highland and one of the well-known strain of Mr. Cowley's short-legged dogs. They are excellent working dogs for pushing out rabbits, and from the thick, rough hedges we have so much in Sussex, where these were taken,—

J. S. OLLIVANT.